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ABSTRACT

This document is a text dealing mainly with Ethiopia's rich cultural heritage and current lifestyles. It gives students the opportunity to go beyond the media coverage that has led to the perception of the whole of Ethiopia as a famine stricken land, and to discover the realities of this new nation, that about 15 percent of the population, mainly in the north, were in need of food assistance in 1988. The text explores the reasons for the famine and its more far reaching effects by looking at the agricultural system, land distribution, resettlement, deforestation, and climate. The text is divided into units according to subject areas. These include land and climate, history, government, religion, people, agriculture, rural life, marriage and family life, industry, cities, housing, food, dress, health, education, the arts, and leisure. Additionally there is a fact sheet, and map of Ethiopia. These units can be duplicated and handed out to the class or used for teacher reference. All illustrations are designed so that they may be made into transparencies and shown on an overhead projector along with the text. The text covers a wide variety of topics. This gives teachers an opportunity to choose the areas on which they would like to concentrate. Suggested activities consist of a series of questions, discussion topics, activities, quizzes, and research projects. These correspond directly to the textual material. Teachers can choose from the variety of suggestions or adapt the ideas to their own methods. (DK)

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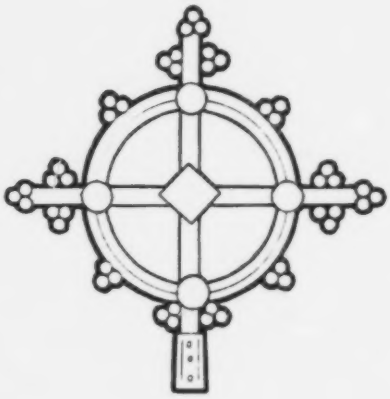
ETHIOPIA

By LESLIE SEMAAN and Illustrated By ROSS POMEROY



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ETHIOPIA

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Teacher Overview

The text *Ethiopia* deals mainly with Ethiopia's rich cultural heritage and current lifestyles. In addition, it gives the students the opportunity to go beyond the media coverage that has led to the perception of the whole of Ethiopia as a famine-stricken land, and to discover the realities of this new nation -- that about 15% of the population, mainly in the north, are in need of food assistance in 1988. (This corresponds with the population of British Columbia in Canada.) The text explores the reasons for the famine and its more far-reaching effects by looking at the agricultural system -- land distribution, resettlement, deforestation and climate.

The text is divided into units according to subject areas, such as The Land and Climate, Cities, History, etc. These units can be duplicated and handed out to the class, used for teacher reference, or made into transparencies and shown on an overhead projector. The text covers a wide variety of topics. This gives teachers an opportunity to choose the areas on which they would like to concentrate.

Suggested Activities consist of a series of questions, discussion topics, activities, quizzes and research projects. These correspond directly to the textual material. Teachers can choose from the variety of suggestions or adapt the ideas to their own methods.

Why Study Ethiopia?

Students today are most likely to know of Ethiopia as the place where famines happen, as the place in Africa from where the TV pictures of starving children come. Students are less likely to understand how or why famines happen, or to know anything about the daily lives of the people who experience them.

They are even less likely to understand how Ethiopia in some ways represents a microcosm of the world from which important lessons can be learned -- not just about other people, but about ourselves and about the planet on which we must all cooperate for survival.

More than 100,000 people died from famine in Ethiopia in 1973-74. In March 1984 Ethiopia was again obliged to make a major international appeal for relief. Later that year, world media services brought home harrowing pictures of millions of Ethiopians stricken or threatened by famine. One million of those people died. Despite the massive media coverage of the crisis and the massive public response to it, in 1988 seven million Ethiopians yet again faced widespread famine.

The main media message from all this has been to urge compassion for less fortunate or "less developed" people. It has done little to explain why famines happen repeatedly, to what kind of people they happen -- their interests, religions, occupations, economy, politics, history, family life, government, arts, or cultural backgrounds -- or how the rest of the world helps to prevent or to promote repetitions of famine.

Famine is not just a matter of climate and seasonal drought, or even of simple environmental management. Famine is inescapably political. It may be triggered by natural disaster, but it is caused by political and economic decisions. Who starves? Why are the rural poor, pastoralists, displaced farmers and agricultural workers found in relief camps but not traders, business people, civil servants or political leaders? Usually it is the children, women and elderly whom famine affects the most.

When the environment is affected by unsustainable patterns of use and when its cycles are disrupted, life-support processes are broken down by political decisions that govern the way people relate to their environment -- how is land to be farmed, what is to be grown, is it for export and cash or local use, who is to benefit from the proceeds, what kind of industry under whose ownership is best, what kind of development should be financed, how can debt be paid off without ruining environments, how much money should be spent on short-term relief and how much on creating self-sufficiency and lasting environmental improvement?

In 1984, the year of the famine, the Ethiopian government spent 46% of its entire budget on arms. But preoccupation with military spending is not confined to Ethiopia. Ethiopia's problems merely reflect an extreme example for the rest of the world, which spends thirty times as much each year on the military as on foreign aid while the environment worldwide steadily deteriorates. There is much for us to learn about Ethiopia and the daily lives of its people -- the subject of this text -- that points to an important lesson that neither we nor the Ethiopians have yet learned: how to live equitably among ourselves and with the planet that supports us.

ETHIOPIA FACT SHEET

FORMER NAME: Abyssinia

SIZE: 1,222,000 km^2 (471,800 mi.^{2}), a little smaller than Manitoba and Saskatchewan combined

LOCATION: The Horn of Africa

POPULATION: 45,977,000 (UN 1984)

CAPITAL CITY: Addis Ababa (population: 1,500,000)

GOVERNMENT: One-party state (The Party of the Working People of Ethiopia). The Shengo is the legislature.

HEAD OF STATE: President of the New People's Democratic Republic of Ethiopia -- est. September 1987 -- Mengistu Haile Mariam

NATIONAL FLAG: Three horizontal stripes of red, green and yellow, symbolizing courage, fertile fields and harvest wealth

CURRENCY: Birr 2.07 = US $1 (1985)

GNP PER CAPITA: US $110.00

LANGUAGES: Amharic (official), English (second official), and 70 other languages, including Oromigna, Tigrinya, Tigre, and Somali

RELIGION: Christianity -- mainly Orthodox Coptic (Monophysite), some Roman Catholic and Protestant, Islam -- mainly Sunnis, traditional African faiths, and Judaism

HEALTH: There is one physician for every 76,000 inhabitants (1982)

LIFE EXPECTANCY: 40.4 years for men; 43.6 years for women

LITERACY RATE: 61%, up from 10% ten years ago

ECONOMY: Major export products: coffee, 60%; hides and skins, 13%; petroleum products, 8%; vegetables, 4%; oilseed, 4%

MAJOR CROPS: Barley, beans, coffee, cotton, millet (*teff*), peas, sugar, wheat

SABAEAN WRITING, SOUTH ARABIC

SAUDI ARABIA
Red Sea
YEMEN
MASSAWA
ASMARA
SUDAN
Eritrea
SOUTHERN YEMEN
Gondar
AXUM
Tigre
Mt. Ras Dashan
MEKELE
GONDAR
ASSAB
Lake Tana
Wollo
DJIBOUTI
Gulf of Aden
Gojam
DESSIE
DEBRE MARKOS
Blue Nile
Shoa
DIRE DAWA
Wallega
ADDIS ABABA
HARAR
Illubabor
Omo River
Arussi
Hararge
JIMMA
GOBA
Kefa
Ogaden
ETHIOPIA
Gemu Goffa
Bale
Sidamo
SOMALIA
Lake Rudolph
UGANDA
KENYA
Lake Victoria
Indian Ocean

12

THE LAND AND CLIMATE

Ethiopia rises like a medieval fortress out of the northeast corner of Africa (known as the "Horn"). Its high mountain terrain has kept much of it isolated from the rest of the world for more than 2,000 years.

AREA

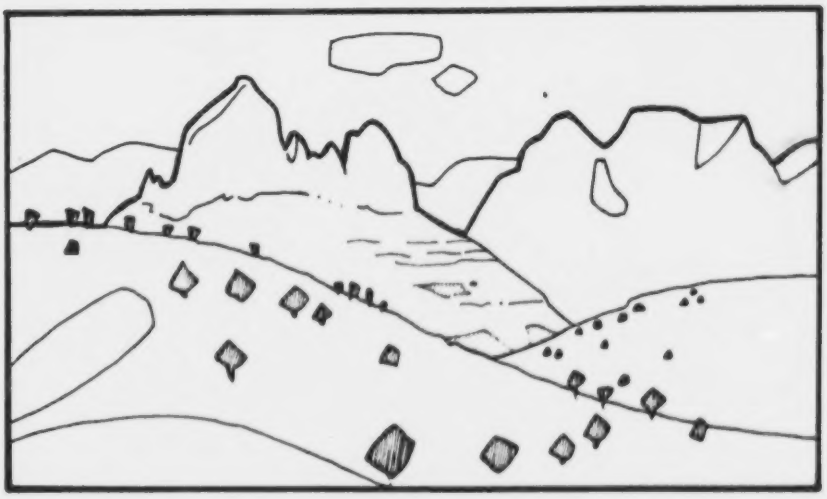
With an area of 1,222,000 km² (471,800 mi.²), it is a little smaller than Manitoba and Saskatchewan combined.

BOUNDARIES

Ethiopia is shaped roughly like a pyramid. Its base rests on the northern border of Kenya and part of Somalia. To the west is the Sudan, and in the northeast the Red Sea gives the country a 1,280 km (800 mi.) coastline. To the east lie Djibouti and Somalia.

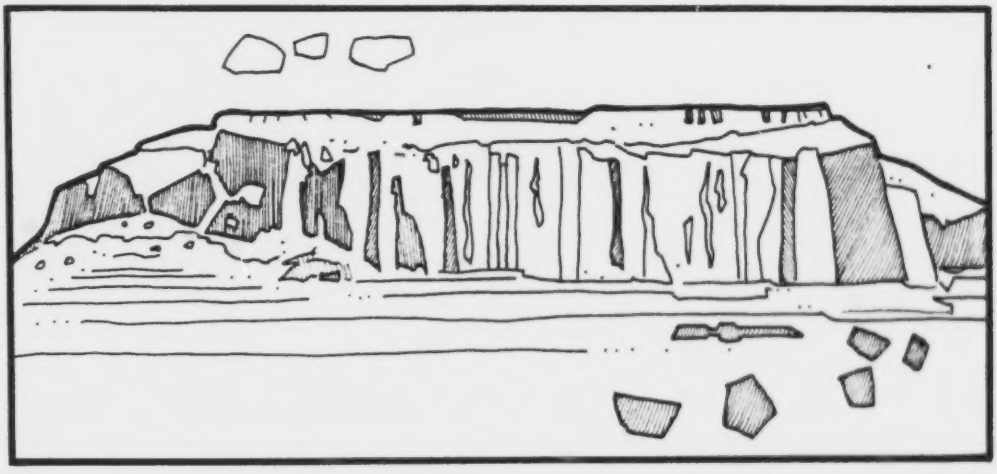
ELEVATIONS

About two-thirds of the country rises high above the hot, dry plains -- averaging 1,800-3,500 m (6,000-10,000 ft.) above sea level. These highlands consist mainly of tableland or plateaux. These are cut through by deep valleys formed over thousands of years by high winds and heavy rainfall which carried away the soil and vegetation, exposing sheer rock along the sides. The plateau landscape has many flat-topped elevations -- called *ambas*. Their large, level tops have been used for growing crops or herding cattle, allowing the inhabitants to be self-sufficient. Above the *ambas*, mountain ranges rise sharply. The tallest mountain, Ras Dashan, towers 4,500 m (15,000 ft.) above sea level -- it is the third highest mountain in Africa.



SEMIEN MOUNTAINS, GONDAR

Throughout history, most of Ethiopia's people have lived in the highlands where the climate is pleasant and where there was usually abundant water. The people were safe here from foreign invaders, and the absence of the malaria mosquito and tsetse fly made settlement relatively easy.



AMBA (FLAT-TOPPED ELEVATION)

THE RIFT VALLEY

The Great Rift Valley splits the highland plateau in two from north to south. Starting at the shores of the Red Sea where it is 300 km (200 mi.) wide, it bisects the country from northeast to southwest and is usually 50 to 65 km (30 to 40 mi.) across.

LOWLANDS

Ethiopia also has desert lowlands, which are among the hottest places on earth. Between the Sudan border and the plateau region is a narrow strip of lowland. Another lies along the Kenya border.

In northeastern Ethiopia is a low plain called the Danakil Depression, situated about 120 m (400 ft.) below sea level. It was once an arm of the Red Sea. There, the temperature at times rises to more than 49° C (120° F.). This narrow coastal region has two seaports -- Massawa and Assab -- both of which have played an important part in the history of the region. Another desert is found in the Ogaden region near the Somali Republic. The few people who live in the area are nomadic herdsmen, who wander the land with their camels, cattle and goats. Waterless and dry, these wastelands have served as natural barriers against invasion.

WATERWAYS

Ethiopia's most important river is the Blue Nile or -- as it is known in Ethiopia -- the Abbai. It is a tributary of the Nile and contributes to making it the world's longest river. The source of the Blue Nile is Lake Tana, which has been described as a heart-shaped, blue sapphire lying among green hills and mountains, 304 m (1000 ft.) above sea level. As the water pours out of the lake to form the Blue Nile it drops 42 m (138 ft.), creating Tisissat Falls, which are 1.6 km (1 mi.) wide. During the rainy season clouds of mist rise above the falls, giving them their local name, "Smoke of Fire".

Throughout the 760 km (470 mi.) the river flows through Ethiopia, it cannot be navigated. Its banks are steep and twisting. Almost throughout its entire journey the river is white with fierce rapids. Where this is not the case, crocodiles and hippopotami inhibit transportation.

CLIMATE

Ethiopians divide their country into three climatic zones, according to altitude:

1. The *Quolla* -- the hot desert and semi-desert lowlands which lie mainly near the country's borders. Since Ethiopia lies only 322 km (200 mi.) from the equator, these areas have the typical hot, tropical climate.

2. The *Woina Dega* -- (in Amharic, the Highland of the Grape) applies to the plateau country which covers much of Ethiopia. This region lies between 1,500 and 2,440 m (5,000 and 8,000 ft.). Addis Ababa, the capital city, is in this region. The annual average temperature here is 10°-18° C (50°-65° F.), with a considerable drop at night. There is very little temperature variation between months.

3. The *Dega* -- the cold zone -- lies above 2,440 km (8,000 ft.).

THE SEASONS

There are two seasons in Ethiopia: wet and dry. The wet or rainy season lasts from the middle of June until September in the central plateau, but may be longer in the south. The highest rainfall is in the southwest where it averages 180 cm (70 in.) annually. In the central highlands, 100-180 cm (40-70 in.) is normal, but in the desert areas, often as little as 2.5 cm (1 in.) is recorded in a year. The dry season which follows the rainy season in September is interrupted once during February or March for the "little rains", then continues until the rains come again in June.

Drought is a regular occurrence in Ethiopia, but for the last 50 years the droughts have become longer and more severe. The present dry spell began in 1968 and has never really eased. Some analysts think that removal of vegetation has reduced the land's ability to retain water, resulting in lower humidity and less rain.

In 1987 the main rains began on schedule in June, but in the north they lasted only a few weeks, and by the middle of July they had failed in many parts of Ethiopia.

HISTORY

Ethiopia is one of the oldest and at the same time one of the newest countries in Africa. Known at various times in the past as Abyssinia, Ethiopia has a long history as a nation. However, the revolution which took place in 1974 has changed Ethiopia politically so much as to make it almost a new nation.

ANCIENT HISTORY

Ethiopia is considered to be one of the areas in Africa where human history is thought to have begun. Recently, some of the earliest known fossil remains of our human ancestors were found in the southern part of the country.

Other archaeological finds show evidence of farming and cattle-herding communities in the highland savanna (plateaux) between 2000 and 1000 B.C. (between three and four thousand years ago). These peoples domesticated many African food plants, including a grain called *teff*, which is not grown anywhere else in the world and which remains the staple food of the country.

Sometime around 700 B.C. a Semitic-speaking people came to settle in Ethiopia from what is now Yemen in southern Arabia. They brought with them metal-working techniques, methods of irrigating the land and perhaps the plough. As a result of this new technology, more complex economic and political structures emerged, leading to the development of a strong trading state in Ethiopia known as Axum. Its wealth was based on trade across the Red Sea with Persia, Arabia and Egypt. They traded ivory, gold and slaves, and got in return cotton cloth, glassware and metal implements. Although the culture of these people was mainly Ethiopian, they derived a script based on the Semitic language of the Sabaeans of southern Arabia. This is Ge'ez or Ethiopic writing, and with some modifications it is still used in Ethiopia today in church services, though it is considered a dead language.

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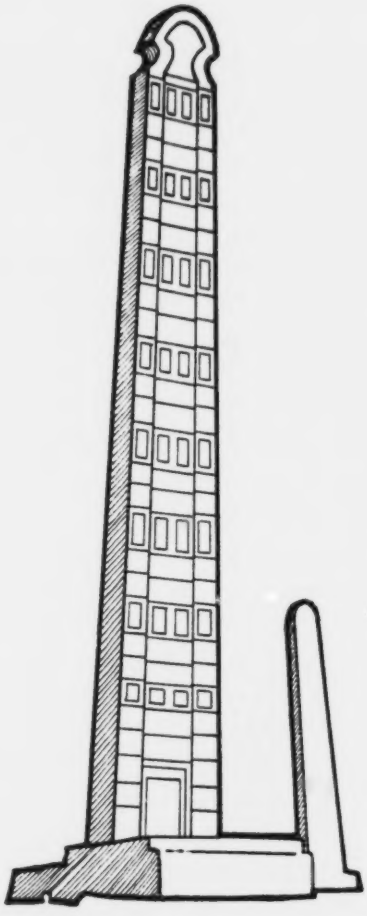
GE'EZ WRITING

THE KINGDOM OF AXUM

In the fourth century A.D. the kingdom of Axum was converted to Christianity. Apparently, a Christian philosopher from Tyre (which is now in Lebanon) stopped at a port on the Red Sea on the way home from India. With him were two boys he was educating. The ship was boarded and all crew and passengers were killed except the two boys, who were favoured by the local king. When these boys grew up they were eventually given posts of trust and responsibility in the kingdom. Over time they converted the king, Ezana, and his people to their own faith -- Christianity. One of them, Frumentrus, eventually went to Alexandria -- then a centre of Christianity. There he was consecrated and became Ethiopia's first bishop.

In the sixth century A.D. there was a rapid decline in power held by the Axum kingdom. This was partly due to the expansion of Moslem peoples in the north and east.



OBELISK, AXUM

COIN, KING EZANA OF AXUM, 330 A.D.

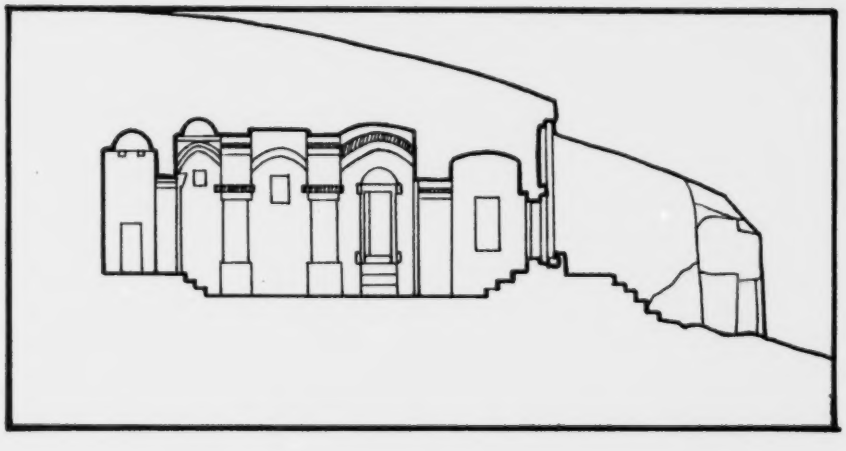
At first, relations between the two religions were friendly. The followers of Mohammed, who had to flee from persecution by the peoples of Mecca in Arabia, were given refuge at Axum. Later, as Islam gathered strength, the coastal regions of Ethiopia began to be dominated by newly converted militant Moslems. Soon the highland regions were cut off and isolated, and Axum began to decline.

THE ZAGWE

The Moslem invasions, however, had very little religious effect on Ethiopia at this time. As a Christian state, it kept its national traditions. About 1100 A.D. a new line of Ethiopian rulers called the Zagwe came to power in central Ethiopia. This line claimed to be descended from Moses. One of the kings, Lalibela, is remembered because he built most of Axum's famous churches, which were hewn from solid rock. These churches still stand and are used today, although some only for special ceremonies.

KING LALIBELA

The Zagwe dynasty came to an end around the year 1270, when the king was forced to give up the throne to a nobleman of the line of Solomon. (He claimed to be descended from King Solomon and the Queen of Sheba.)

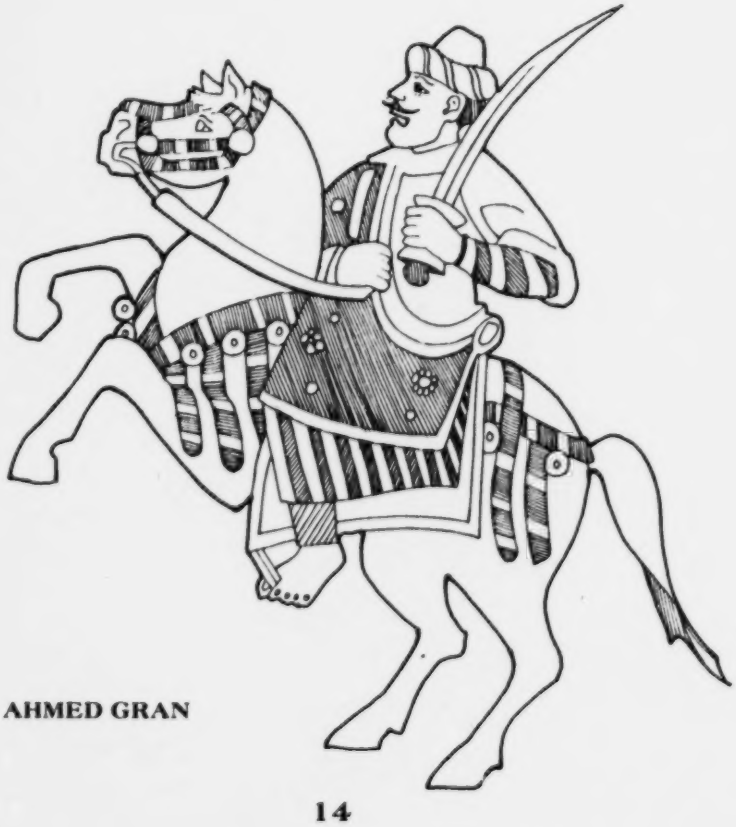


CROSS-SECTION, ROCK-HEWN CHURCH

THE PORTUGUESE

The story of a lost Christian kingdom in the east struggling against the Moslems reached Europe. The kingdom, it was said, was ruled by a priest-king named Prester John. The Portuguese were especially interested in this kingdom. They felt they had found a lost civilization in Ethiopia. They hoped its Christian king would help them open the Red Sea and Indian Ocean shipping lanes which were controlled by the Moslems. This would allow the Portuguese to trade with India and the Far East. In 1520 the Portuguese established an embassy in Ethiopia. Their objectives were never met, however, and the Portuguese left seven years later.

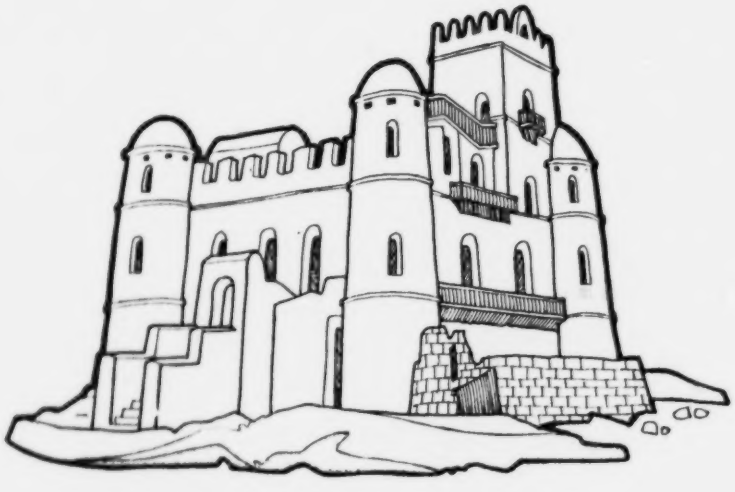
Soon after their departure Ethiopia suffered one of the worst Moslem invasions in its history. It was led by Ahmed Gran, who was fanatically anti-Christian and an accompished soldier. He was supported by a small Turkish force armed with muskets. Guns were generally not in use in Africa at this time. Gran's men burned churches and monasteries and the irreplaceable documents within them. They killed hundreds of priests and converted people to Islam. Much of the literary and intellectual heritage of Ethiopia was lost.



AHMED GRAN

The emperor fled to an *amba* (see The Land) but managed to send to Portugal for military assistance. The Portuguese agreed to help, but for a price: the Ethiopians, who followed the Eastern Orthodox branch of Christianity, had to agree to accept Roman Catholic jurisdiction. When the king agreed, four hundred Portuguese warriors armed with guns landed at Massawa (see map). It was 1541.

Led by Christopher da Gama, son of the famous explorer, Vasco da Gama, the expedition was defeated in their first battle. But with the remnants of the Ethiopian troops they managed to overcome Gran and eventually defeat the Moslem forces.



THE CASTLE OF FASILADAS

A period of Portuguese influence followed. Since the king had vowed to adopt Roman Catholicism, Jesuit priests entered the country to settle. Eventually there was a test of strength between the Coptic Christians and the Jesuits. The Emperor Fasilidas officially expelled the Jesuits in 1633. Teaching the Roman Catholic faith was forbidden on pain of death. Those who persisted in their teachings were executed. Fasilidas established his capital at Gondar, a mountain stronghold. Gondar became Ethiopia's most culturally advanced capital. It was a centre for poetry, music, manuscript art, architecture and commerce, with a population of 80,000.

Today, Gondar is a city of about 32,000 inhabitants. Its ruined castles and many churches show the accomplishments of its vanished past.

FEUDAL WARFARE

The next two centuries were a time of constant feudal warfare between rival princes. Even the European powers, who were by now engaged in a race for African colonies, seemed to take little notice of this mountain-and-desert kingdom with its inhospitable terrain. Also, no leader had emerged who was strong enough to unify and modernize Ethiopia. Until 1800, most of Ethiopia was shut off from the rest of the world. In this isolation were developed the traditions and customs of everyday life that still persist today, especially in the rural areas.

MENELIK II

Then, during the 1800s a line of powerful Amhara kings rose to re-establish and expand the rule of the emperor. Large areas of the south were conquered, forcing Moslem and other non-Christian peoples to pay tribute to the king. By unifying the nation, it was protected from European imperialism, and the foundation was laid for the modern nation of Ethiopia.

One of Ethiopia's most progressive emperors was Menelik II (1889-1913). He built the first western-style schools, hospitals and roads. He established the Bank of Abyssinia and implemented a national currency and postage stamps. As well, he started a railway from the capital, which he established at Addis Ababa, to the port of Djibouti on the Red Sea.

In spite of all the progressive programs, a strong "feudal" system existed in the country. It was "feudal" in that the Amhara aristocracy was given land grants by the state. The peasantry inherited the right to work the land but had to pay tribute to the aristocracy in the form of labour and a portion of their crops. The Church was allied with the monarchy, and the high clergy were members of the aristocracy. Therefore, the Church controlled large areas of land, as well as the peasants who farmed that land.

MENELIK'S SEAL

When the southern regions of the country were conquered by Emperor Menelik II's forces in the late 1800s, two-thirds of the land became the property of the state. It was then given to members of the royal court and the Church, as well as the officers and soldiers of the conquering army. The southern peoples became tenant farmers on their own land. They had to pay large tributes of labour and produce to the landlords who lived in the north.

EMPEROR MENELIK II

This system resulted in extreme poverty for most of the population. Also there were few schools, medical facilities or other social services. The Emperor's rule was completely autocratic, while the peasants had no political rights.

One of the problems during Menelik II's reign was that of dealing with European powers. The Italians had been the main traders along the coast of the Red Sea after the Suez Canal opened in 1869. To take over the coastal region, they used the excuse that some Italian missionaries had been killed by Ethiopians, and the area of Eritrea was consequently declared a colony of Italy. Menelik agreed to Eritrea's boundaries in order to stop further Italian intrusion. Within a few years, however, the Italians invaded Ethiopia from the north. Menelik succeeded in stopping the Italians at Adowa in Tigre province in 1896, and the Italians were forced to recognize Ethiopia's independence although they kept their colony of Eritrea.

Menelik's international prestige was enhanced by his victory, and shortly afterwards he received diplomatic missions from the political powers of the time, which included France, Britain and Italy. He used their financial and technical aid to develop Ethiopia's industry and services. In 1906, these powers, expecting Menelik's death and the breakup of his state, came together to sign the Tripartite Treaty. In this agreement they divided the country into three spheres of interest which each would protect if necessary.

Menelik died in 1913 and his grandson, Lej Iyasu, took over the government. After three years he was dethroned because of his sympathy toward and conversion to Islam, which angered the Church and the Christian Amhara nobility. Princess Zawditu, who was Menelik's daughter, became Empress, and Ras Tafari Makonnen was appointed Regent and heir to the throne.

EMPRESS ZAWDITU

HAILE SELASSIE

Empress Zawditu ruled from 1916 to 1930 when, at her sudden death, Ras Tafari was crowned Emperor Haile Selassie. By 1932 Benito Mussolini, the fascist dictator of Italy, expressed an interest in establishing a colony in Ethiopia. The country was fertile and could grow crops for export, and it had many important minerals -- especially gold.

HAILE SELASSIE

Using the colony of Eritrea as a military base, the Italian troops invaded Ethiopia in 1936. By May, the Italians had taken Addis Ababa, and Italy announced its annexation of Ethiopia. The Emperor went to Geneva to appeal to the League of Nations for help. With these words he addressed the League of Nations (translated from Amharic):

"I, Haile Selassie, Emperor of Ethiopia, am present here today to ask for the impartial justice due to my people....

"It is not only upon Ethiopian soldiers that the Italian government has made war. Above all, it has struck a peaceful people far removed from the battlefield by killing them with terror raids and exterminating them all together....

"A mechanism spraying yperite liquid was installed in the aircraft, and it was arranged that a fine rain, bringing death, should descend over vast tracts of the country. From last January onwards this death-dealing rain descended without interruption upon our soldiers, upon women, children, cattle, streams, stagnant waters, as well as pastures. The Italian army commander made the aeroplanes repeat this work of theirs in order to extinguish all living creatures and to turn into poison the waters and grazing grounds.

"Those thousands of people who drank the water upon which this poisonous rain had settled or ate the food which poison had touched died in dreadful agony. It was to make known to the civilized world the torment inflicted upon the Ethiopian people that I decided to come to Geneva.

"...Although my war equipment was much less than the aggressor's, and although I possess no aeroplanes, artillery, other weapons whatsoever, or indeed, hospital services for the wounded, my hope rested on the covenant of the League.

"...At a time when my people are close to extinction, when the help of the League may yet be able to save it from that fate...it is proper that I should be permitted to speak the truth, without holding back anything....

"Ethiopia has previously asked for financial aid. She is asking for it now....

"You representatives of the world assembled here! I have come to Geneva to carry out the saddest duty that has befallen an Emperor. What answer am I to take back to my people?"

The Emperor was turned down by the League. Most of the world powers recognized the Italian conquest. The Emperor sat out the years of occupation in exile in England. Ethiopia was a colony of Italy for five years.

Many Italians came to settle in Ethiopia, as they had in Eritrea, working in the rapidly growing industries and businesses or managing large coffee plantations in the highlands. Hundreds of miles of roads were constructed. The Italians also put into effect a system of racial segregation.

When Italy entered World War II against Britain and France, the British sent troops to help drive the Italians out of Ethiopia. On May 5, 1941, five years from the day Italian troops had entered Addis Ababa, the Emperor Haile Selassie returned to the capital and to his throne.

Ethiopia was now burdened by what was left of Italian colonialism. International debts built up by the Italians had to be paid. Thousands of Italian settlers needed food and medicine. There were not enough trained Ethiopians to take over government positions. Also, most industries and businesses were foreign-owned -- by Greeks, Italians or Arabs.

BENITO MUSSOLINI

The Emperor carried out many reforms in the following years. Roads, communication systems, schools and hospitals were built. These, however, benefitted the already wealthy aristocracy, landlords and foreigners, and not the population in general. Land reforms made the landlords more secure but forced many of the small farmers off their land. Among the educated, unemployment was serious and prices for goods -- especially petroleum -- rose higher and higher.

Between 1972 and 1974, parts of Ethiopia experienced a famine (see Agriculture -- Drought) in which more than 100,000 people died. The Selassie government at first ignored the situation and then tried to keep the news from the world and the rest of the nation. However, the Ethiopians found out about the starvation of their own people from international news agencies. They were shocked!

Ethiopia was ready for a revolution.

THE REVOLUTION

> "At 8:00 a.m. on September 12, 1974 (*Maskarem* [September] 2, 1967, in the Ethiopian calendar), a white Volkswagen Beetle raced through the eucalyptus trees and gigantic, rare flowers and screeched to a halt at the main entrance to the Imperial Palace. Very few people knew the occupants of the car were about to arrest Emperor Haile Selassie I, King of Kings, The Chosen One of God, Lion of Judah and alleged descendant of the Queen of Sheba and King Solomon.
>
> "The operation was carefully planned -- it was 'top secret'. The three soldiers chosen to carry out the operation were not informed of its objective until minutes before arriving at the palace.
>
> "Suddenly the secret was out. As the car took the corner near the Djibouti railway crossing at full speed, someone recognized the august person -- the frail, shrunken body, all that was left of a dynasty three centuries old, a body wracked by the nausea of fear, yet still hoping for a miracle -- and screamed at the top of his voice: 'It's the Emperor! They've arrested him!'
>
> "The prisoner was confined to a large room in the garrison. Ten minutes later, a young officer entered the room and read him the document decreeing his removal."

This meant the end of the immense power of Emperor Haile Selassie. The old constitution and parliament were abolished and a Provisional Military Administrative Council (PMAC) was established. Sixty people, including former ministers and members of the Selassie family, were executed in November. The Emperor was not harmed, but died in prison a year later. In December 1974, Ethiopia was proclaimed a socialist state.

In the first year after the revolution many changes took place. The PMAC -- or Dergue, as it is called -- took over 70 important foreign-owned companies. These included insurance companies, banks, airlines, supermarkets, and other industries and businesses. Later, all private schools became government-controlled. Islam was recognized as a national religion (see Religion), and the government lessened the power and wealth of the Christian Church.

Land reform, though, was the most important change. Using the slogan, "All land to those who till it", the government took control of all rural land for redistribution among the small farmers, cooperatives and state farms. Then, all the land in the cities was nationalized, and people were allowed to own only one house. Before the revolution, the Amharic aristocracy controlled 60% of the land, and leaders of the Christian Church owned 35%.

To help the people in the countryside, the Dergue closed the secondary schools and universities so that students and teachers could help prepare the farmers for land reforms, inform them about health care, teach them to read and write, and help build roads.

Before long, however, many Ethiopians became disillusioned with the policies of the Dergue, and violence broke out against the government. In the middle of this conflict, Lieutenant-Colonel Mengistu Haile Mariam became the leader of the country. He has remained so up until today.

ETHIOPIAN SOLDIER

ERITREA

Eritrea, an area the size of England, borders on the Red Sea and is viewed by Ethiopia as its northernmost province. However, the people there have been fighting for their independence from Ethiopia for the past 26 years. An entire generation of Eritreans has known no life other than war.

Eritrea's history as a separate political state began in 1889 when the Italians took over the area. They transformed Eritrea into a settler colony, taking the best land for farms and plantations. Later they started many light industries. When the Suez Canal was opened in 1869, roads, railroads, and ports on the Red Sea were built. This allowed the Italians to export the agricultural and manufactured products that were being produced in Eritrea. By the 1940s about 60,000 people of Italian descent lived in Eritrea.

Following the defeat of the Italians during the Second World War the British took control of Eritrea. They worked toward developing an Eritrean educated class to counterbalance the Italian settlers. Some of the reforms the British made were:

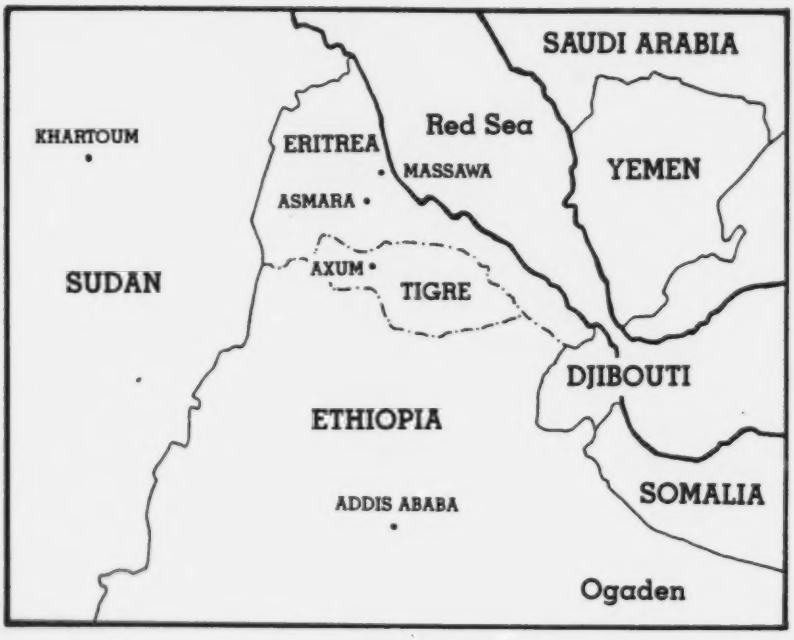
- to remove the official "colour bar" the Italians had introduced and allow Eritreans to take part in the running of the government;
- to promote the forming of political parties to represent different political ideas;
- to promote trade unions;
- to sponsor education and literacy programs.

It was this experience with foreign rule, both British and Italian, which gave Eritrea a national identity different from the rest of Ethiopia.

In 1952 the United Nations gave Eritrea self-government in its domestic affairs, but it was federated with Ethiopia under Emperor Haile Selassie. This agreement provided landlocked Ethiopia with much-needed ports on the Red Sea, for access to the important Suez Canal trade route.

Over the next nine years, Eritrean political parties and trade unions were banned by the Ethiopian government. The Eritrean official languages were replaced by Amharic, the official language of Ethiopia, as the language of government and education. Newspapers were censored. Industries were closed, and some factories were moved to the Ethiopian capital, Addis Ababa.

Despite the fact that in 1961 the people of Eritrea were opposed to the Ethiopian government, the Eritrean parliament voted to unite with Ethiopia as one state. How did this happen? Much controversy surrounds the event. Some say the vote never took place, that Ethiopia on its own made Eritrea a province. Others say the Ethiopian armed police were present to make sure the vote was in favour of the Ethiopians. Others say the members of the Eritrean parliament were bribed or intimidated to vote in favour of the union with Ethiopia. Whatever the method, Eritrea was pronounced a province of Ethiopia.



ERITREA / TIGRE MAP

The opposition to Ethiopian domination had been building up over the years. Seeing that all peaceful and now political means for independence were closed, the Eritreans escalated their fighting to try to win their independence. This was difficult for Eritrea. In the 1960's Ethiopia received a lot of financial aid and investment from the United States in return for allowing the U.S. to have a military communications base in the Eritrean Capital city of Asmara. (The Red Sea basin has a strategic position in world security.) Ethiopia used the U.S. aid to buy weapons to fight the Eritrean guerrillas, who received some backing from Arab states.

After the 1974 Ethiopian revolution, U.S. support ceased, and financial and military aid came instead from the Soviet Union and Cuba.

Over the years, the Ethiopian central government has tried to put an end to Eritrean villagers' helping the guerrillas. The villages have been burned and the people killed. The Eritreans started to retreat from these abuses of human rights, and refugees by the hundreds of thousands have fled to other parts of Ethiopia, the Sudan, the Middle East, Europe and North America.

Eritrean liberation movements now control much of Eritrea. In addition to struggling for independence, they have started many reforms. These include:

- land distribution: among many other reforms, women are now allowed to own land;
- primary education, which is being taught in the traditional languages of four of the nationalities;
- an extensive literacy campaign, which has been set up to teach adults to read and write in their own language. (There is no alphabet and therefore no form of writing for five of Eritrea's nine languages.);
- radio broadcasts of information in five of Eritrea's languages;
- health care services for people and animals: now barefoot doctors, dentists and veterinarians try to promote prevention of disease. Their work is difficult, as the drought and the war have caused many casualties;
- programs to improve the status of women: child marriages, as well as arranged marriages without the consent of the bride, have been outlawed. Women now have equal rights with men to divorce and to inherit property.

Eritreans do not consider themselves to be Ethiopians, and they intend to continue their struggle until they achieve independence.

TIGRE

Tigre (pronounced Tigray), a province about half the size of Eritrea, lies between Eritrea and the rest of Ethiopia.

In Tigre, the people say: "Yes, we are Ethiopians, but we are not the same as those people in the south -- we have our own languages, our own history, our own culture."

There are many different national groups in Ethiopia but, since the turn of the century, the rulers -- except when the Italians were in power -- have been from the Shoan Amhara people. This rule has been imposed on the people of Tigre, who in general are not Amharic.

Their province has often been Ethiopia's battleground. Just before the turn of the century, when Menelik II's (see History) troops of 80,000 men were fighting the Italians, they were forced to live off the land. More Tigreans apparently died defending their homes against the army than did Italians in battle. Forty years later, when the Italians invaded, the main battlefields once again were in Tigre.

Tigre's efforts to revolt were severely dealt with by the central government, which carried out raids on the farmers and their livestock. Also, large areas of the best land were given to government supporters.

As in all of Ethiopia, the vast majority of the people of Tigre were kept in severe poverty. At harvest, a farmer would lose half his crop to his landlord, a quarter in tax to the central government, and ten percent to the Church. This made it impossible for a family to build up reserves which would allow it to get through the occasional droughts or rain shortages.

Also, the central government did not establish any industries in Tigre; few roads were built; there were only four hospitals, with a total of 300 beds, and three high schools, for a population of about five million. Illiteracy was about 90 percent, and almost half of the children died before they reached five years.

Conditions changed little with the 1974 revolution, and in 1975 various groups of Tigreans began to organize against the central government. Today the fighting continues, with the Ethiopian government now backed by the Soviet Union. Despite this, the Tigrean liberation movements control 85% of the land, and 90% of the population live in liberated areas.

Although the Tigrean people want to remain within Ethiopia, they also want a democratic country: the right to elect governing bodies, freedom of expression, sufficient education and health care facilities. They want Ethiopia to be a country in which all national groups have a voice.

OGADEN

The Ogaden is a region located next to Somalia in eastern Ethiopia. Most of the people living there are Moslems and are related to the Somalis (see People). They wish to be independent or to join the Ogaden with Somalia.

Somalia supported and armed a guerrilla organization, the West Somalia Liberation Front (WSLF), which wants self-determination for the Ogaden. In 1977 the dispute broke out into war.

The Soviet Union had been supplying arms and economic aid to Somalia for almost ten years. In return, they were given the right to use a strategically located port on the Red Sea. After the 1974 coup in Ethiopia, the Soviets began to send military and financial aid to Ethiopia's new Marxist government. (The United States had previously supplied aid to Haile Selassie's government.) Russian and Cuban military advisors came into Ethiopia to train the army to fight against the WSLF. This angered Somalia, and it broke all ties with the Soviet Union.

Aided by Somali troops, the WSLF won many victories against the Ethiopian government in the early fighting. However, with the help of Cuban and Russian troops, Ethiopia took back the territory. Although Somalia withdrew their soldiers in 1978, they have refused to give up their claims to the Ogaden.

Many thousands of Somalis left the Ogaden and were in refugee camps in Somalia and Djibouti for many years. Now, according to the Ethiopian government, they are beginning to return home. Most of the former refugees who returned have gone back to their home villages in hope of finding their old pastures. Things are not easy for them, however. Their livestock has dwindled, and the drought is widespread in the Ogaden. The level of the rivers is extremely low and threatens irrigation schemes. The wells are also at an all-time low.

The Ogaden has very few natural resources and is one of the poorest regions in the world (despite rumours of oil). The Ethiopian government plans to develop the whole region, but lack of funds and the harsh conditions of the area pose many difficulties for the people returning as well as for those who remained.

GOVERNMENT

On September 13, 1987, after 13 years of military rule, following the 1974 revolution, Ethiopia became the New People's Democratic Republic of Ethiopia. Mengistu Haile Mariam, who had been chairman of the Provisional Military Administrative Council, the Dergue, became president.

MENGISTU HAILE MARIAM

Ethiopians had voted three months earlier to elect the new legislative body called the National Shengo. It has 813 members and is patterned on the system in the Soviet Union, with whom Ethiopia is allied. Sessions of the Shengo are being held in Congress Hall, which was built three years ago to celebrate the tenth anniversary of the revolution. Under the new civilian constitution, the one-chamber assembly will sit once a year, and members are elected for five-year terms.

Many believe these changes are cosmetic and little will change from the recent military rule as long as Mengistu -- who is also commander-in-chief of Ethiopia's armed forces -- retains his wide-ranging power.

RELIGION

Prayer, fasting and religious observances are an important part of everyday life for Ethiopians -- Christians, Moslems and Jews. Often the beliefs and practices of these main religions are blended with the traditional spiritual religious customs.

CHRISTIANITY

The ancient rituals of the Ethiopian Orthodox or Coptic Church have changed little since Christianity arrived in Ethiopia more than 1500 years ago. Moslem invasions and the 1974 revolution have challenged the Church, but it has clung to its ways, just as the people have clung to the Church. If you attended a church service in Ethiopia it might seem like stepping back into biblical times.

This is a description of an Easter service held in Gondar (see History) at the Church of Debre Berhan Selassie, which is more than 300 years old. The service began at 8:30 in the evening.

> "In the semi-darkness, the choir of 20 white-robed deacons beat drums and sang slow chants. The priests read from the Bible in the ancient liturgical language, Ge'ez (see History), which only a minority understand. Burning incense filled the old church with frankincense, and candles cast flickering, golden light on the holy paintings on the walls and the ceiling.
>
> "The Mass went on into the night. The tabot, the representation of the true Ark, was brought out of the Holy of Holies and paraded three times around the church, preceded by a bell-ringer. There were no pews in the church, and most of the congregation were huddled on the floor, exhausted by the late hour and a two-day fast. At three in the morning the service drew to a close."

The Coptic Church plays an important part in the lives of its millions of members. There are roughly 190,000 priests, deacons and monks, many of whom make their living in farming or business.

Ethiopia has about 25,000 church buildings, ranging from simple cottages to magnificent cathedrals. On the plateaux, most churches are built in a circular form. From the inside out, they are divided into three circular sections. The innermost section is called the Holy of Holies and contains the tabot -- the representative Ark. Only priests and deacons are permitted to enter this area. The second zone, called the Holy, is reserved for those who regularly fast and take communion. The majority of the congregation occupy the outer zone -- the court. Before entering a church, everyone removes their shoes. Women and men are segregated in the church and each use separate doors.

COPTIC PRIEST

During the year there are about 250 fasting days which a believer is expected to observe. On a fasting day no meat or other animal products, such as milk, butter or eggs, may be eaten. As with the Moslems and Jews, certain foods are prohibited entirely; these include the meat of cloven-hoofed animals, such as pigs. Also, the only meat that may be eaten must be slaughtered by an Orthodox Christian in a prescribed way.

ISLAM

About half of the people of Ethiopia are Moslems (also known as Muslims) -- that is, people who practise the religion known as Islam. This religion began in the deserts of Arabia in the seventh century A.D. Its great leader was named Mohammed, and Moslems believe that Mohammed is the last great prophet to have been sent by God to the people of the world. Mohammed was a merchant who lived in the city of Mecca in southwest Arabia; he was born there about 570 A.D., and lived there until 622 A.D. (see below). At this time, most of the people in the empires surrounding Arabia were Christians, Jews and Zoroastrians. The faiths of Christianity and Judaism -- whose followers believed in only one God -- were particularly important in the cities and on the caravan routes of Arabia. When he was about 40, Mohammed himself came to believe in the one God; he also believed that God had commanded him, Mohammed, to spread God's message in Arabia. Mohammed tried to convince the people of Mecca, but they worshipped several different gods and would not accept the strict monotheism of Islam.

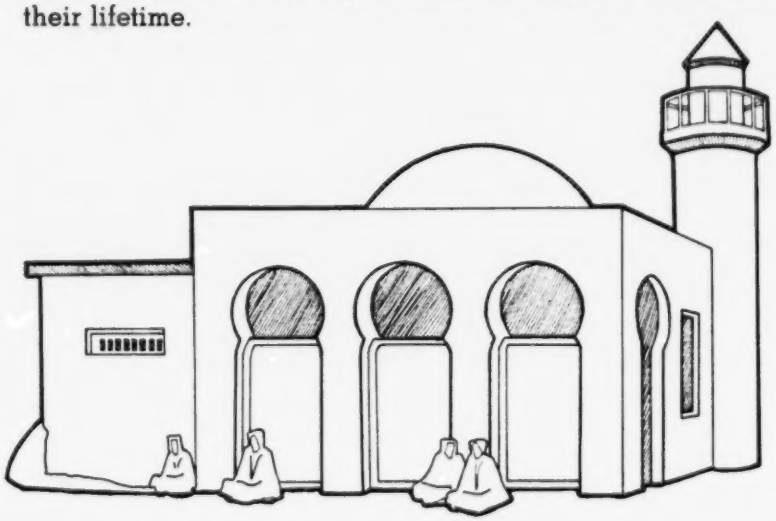
Mohammed did begin to have a small group of followers in Mecca, but they began to face increasing hostility as time went by. So Mohammed sent some of them -- perhaps 50 to 80 in all -- to find refuge in Ethiopia. Among them were one of Mohammed's daughters and one of his future wives. The Christian king of Ethiopia treated the refugees well and gave them complete freedom to practise their own religion. When some of the refugees later returned to Arabia, the king sent them back with elaborate presents. Mohammed appreciated what the Ethiopians had done for his people, and he ordered later that Moslems should always leave Ethiopia in peace. It is interesting that the Moslems who remained in Ethiopia probably formed the first Islamic community in the world to be set up outside Arabia itself.

As time passed, life became even more difficult for the Moslems of Mecca. In the year 622, Mohammed and his followers secretly left Mecca and moved to Medina, a nearby town but one whose people welcomed Mohammed and were eager to accept him as a leader. Moslems call this move to Medina the Hegira (which means the Emigration), and they celebrate 622 A.D. as the first year of the Islamic calendar, for they feel that their religion really began when the Moslems set up their own community. From Mecca and Medina, Islam soon spread to all of Arabia. Within one hundred years, it reached from India to Spain; now it reaches around the world.

The word "Islam" means "submission to God", and Mohammed believed that the "message" that came to him throughout his later life came directly from God. After Mohammed's death, all these "words of God" were collected and put together in one book called the Koran (which means "The Reading" or "The Recitation"). Also, Mohammed's followers were eager to write down all his other teachings -- in fact, to write down every memory of his life that they could recall. This body of memories and teachings grew into a great collection called the Hadith (which means "The Tradition"). The Koran and the Hadith affect every aspect of a devout Moslem's life, both as an individual and as a member of his community.

The five most fundamental rules of Islam (sometimes called the "Pillars of Islam") are: the Profession of Faith, Prayer, Almsgiving, Fasting, and Pilgrimage. (In Arabic, *shahada, sala, zaka, saum, and hajj.*) This means that all Moslems must:

1. Believe and affirm that "There is no God but Allah, and Mohammed is his prophet." (In Arabic, "*La ilaha illa-llah wa Muhammad resulullah.*");
2. Pray five times a day, facing Mecca, the holy city;
3. Give charity to the needy;
4. Go without food or drink (and without even water, medicine or cigarettes; it is wrong for anything to cross one's lips) from sunrise to sunset every day of the month of Ramadan, the ninth month of the Islamic year;
5. If at all possible, make a pilgrimage to Mecca at least once during their lifetime.



ISLAMIC MOSQUE, ASMARA

Mohammed taught that all men who follow Islam are brothers, and all Moslems are considered equal before God and in law. Moslems believe that Islam is the only true religion, but they honour the religions of others who believe in only one God and who have a revealed Scripture -- a Book. They honour Abraham, Moses, and Christ as prophets; Jews and Christians are called "People of the Book" and have a special place in Islam.

Moslems feel that prayers are particularly satisfying when carried out in the company of other Moslems. Their public place of worship is called a mosque (in Arabic, *masjed*, which means "place of prostration"), and each Moslem town has at least one mosque. Most mosques have minarets, and (before loudspeakers and broadcasting) the muezzin used to call the people to prayer from the balcony of this minaret. Every adult male tries to attend the Friday noon service at the main mosque of his community. (Women also attend the mosque in many Moslem communities, but their attendance on Friday is not a special duty.) There are no statues or pictures of people or animals in the mosque, for Moslems think that "graven images" are forbidden. People who enter a mosque must cover their heads and take off their shoes before entering. There are many beautiful mosques in Ethiopia.

JUDAISM

The Jews of Ethiopia are known to the world as Falasha, but they call themselves Beta Israel -- The House of Israel.

The Falashas say that they are descended from the Jews who came to Ethiopia with King Menelik I, who is thought by Ethiopians to be the son of King Solomon and the Queen of Sheba.

A common theory is, though, that 2000 years ago there were many people in Ethiopia who believed in Judaism. After the rise of Christianity in the fourth century there were many who refused to exchange their Judaic beliefs for Christian ones. As a result, they were persecuted and withdrew from the coastal regions into the highland areas around Gondar -- which is still their home today.

The Falashas' traditional synagogues are much like the homes they live in, but a little larger. They are in most ways identical to the village churches (see Christianity), except for the synagogue roof, which is decorated with the six-sided Star of David.

Until the 1974 revolution the Falashas were not permitted to own land. They rented land, however, and eked out an existence growing *teff* and raising sheep and cattle. Because of the restrictions on land ownership, over the centuries they became craftsmen, specializing in metalwork, pottery and the building trades.

Their central belief is in "the God of Israel, the Invisible, Creator of Heaven and Earth." They strictly follow Old Testament laws which include observing the Sabbath, circumcision, the animals which are permitted for food, contact with the dead, and the laws of ritual uncleanliness. Intermarriage with people who are not Falashas is unknown.

FALASHA YOUTH

Many Falasha elements are the same as in Christianity, but they have their own specific customs and beliefs which set them apart -- the most important of which is their rejection of Jesus and their belief in the coming, not the return, of the Messiah.

The fact that the Falashas have faithfully upheld a form of Judaism for centuries despite oppression and persecution is considered proof that they should be thought of as Jews.

In 1980 Israel launched a secret campaign called Operation Moses. Over the years since then, the Israeli government has been airlifting Falashas from Kenya and the Sudan where they had fled. They were then taken to Israel where they have now settled.

THE PEOPLE

Ethiopia has been called an ethnic museum; its peoples belong to more than 40 different ethnic groups and speak an estimated 70 languages. Among the people are believers of three of the world's major religions, as well as those who believe traditional African religious systems. The peoples often have separate origins, histories, customs and loyalties.

THE AMHARAS AND TIGREANS

One Ethiopian folk story of creation goes:

> "When God made men, He molded them from clay. He put the first batch in the fire, but left them in too long and they came out burned. These He threw away down south. The second batch he took out too soon and they remained pasty white. These He threw away to the north. The third batch came out just right, and He put them in Ethiopia."

The Amharas and Tigreans are descendants of the Semitic peoples who arrived thousands of years ago. Most of them are Ethiopian Orthodox Christians and believe they are the chosen ones of God. They believe that Menelik I, the son of King Solomon and the Queen of Sheba, took the real Ark of the Covenant, containing the stone tablets of the law from Jerusalem, and brought it to Ethiopia. Its presence has given a special grace to the Amharic and Tigrean people. Traditionally they have been the warriors and priests of Ethiopia, and for centuries they have been a privileged class in Ethiopian society, responsible for its feudal structure until the 1974 revolution.

Most of the Amhara and Tigreans, though, are ordinary farmers whose existence is as difficult as that of other agricultural peoples in Ethiopia.

Although these two peoples together make up about one-third of the population, they are concentrated in the highland provinces. The Amharas speak Amharic, the official language of the country, while the Tigreans speak Tigrinya. Both of these languages evolved from the ancient Semitic language, Ge'ez.

AMHARIC MAN

THE GALLA-OROMO

The Galla or, as they call themselves, Oromo, peoples are the largest ethnic group in Ethiopia. They make up about 40% of the population. About 400 years ago the Oromo swept into Ethiopia from the southern part of the country, Somalia and northern Kenya. Most of them took up agriculture, and different groups became isolated from one another. Those in contact with the Amharas became Christian, while those who lived close to Moslems adopted Islam. They also, however, kept most of their traditional beliefs and customs.

THE BORANA

One group of the Oromo which is very different from the others is the Borana, a pastoral people living in an arid region bordering Kenya. Their main occupation is raising cattle; they often drain off the blood from the necks of their stock. Especially in cold weather, this, along with milk, forms an important part of their diet.

Borana males, along with the other Oromo men, pass through a series of ten stages of development throughout their lives. Each stage lasts eight years and gives men different responsibilities for the period. Passage from one stage to the next usually involves a ritual ceremony.

Stages:

1. In the first *gada*, or grade, parents are very protective and they are not allowed to punish the children.
2. At this stage the boys are given some responsibilities, which may include caring for the small livestock and horses of the family.
3. The third grade (especially among the Borana) is a time when the young men take the family herds in search of new pastures. Often the boys do not return to their families for two to three years. Some die -- perhaps while hunting or defending their cattle, or from a snake-bite or malaria. Those who return have the scars of their harsh life.
4. These young men spend much of their time assisting their father with pastoral duties. Many of those in their twenties and early thirties begin the long process of marriage negotiations. They also play a part in tribal government.
5. During this grade men learn about military organization and leadership. Men do not usually have children until they are 40.
6. This is the stage of leadership -- both ritual and political. The leaders -- all of whom come from this group -- form the assembly which makes decisions about important problems between groups or clans.
7., 8., 9. These grades -- which cover a period of 27 years -- are a time of semi-retirement.

THE SOMALI

The Somali inhabit mainly a low, arid region north of Somalia, called the Ogaden (see History).

Somalis are generally Moslems and are largely a semi-nomadic people, camping on the grasslands during certain seasons to feed their herds of camels, sheep and goats. At other times they move on to seek new water and pasture, although national boundaries are now a barrier to traditional migration patterns, and environmental overuse occurs where movement is prevented.

THE DANAKIL-AFAR

The Danakil or Afar, as they call themselves, have a reputation as a fierce, warlike group. They live in the most inhospitable area of the country -- the scrub-brush, hot-sand, black-lava lowlands of the Danakil Depression. Much like their neighbours, the Somalis, they are a nomadic people who have adopted Islam as their religion.

The homes of the Afar are usually built of grass mats on a hoop. Sometimes their shape is a long oval and sometimes a round beehive form. Inside, there is a low platform made of thin sticks, which takes up two-thirds of the total space. This is a bed at night and a couch by day.

When it is time to move to new pastures, a family can take apart their homes, roll up the grass mats, tie up the hoops and load all their possessions onto two or three camels within half an hour.

Children contribute by taking care of the herds. At milking time, both men and women take part. The Afar's main form of sustenance is milk, with a little meat or grain at times. Often, women put the surplus milk in a skin, which they slosh about, either on their backs or on the ground, to make butter which is sold or bartered for grain in the markets.

In preparation for market days, the Afar arrive in towns with their long camel-trains. Along with livestock and their products, they trade the salt which they have mined from deposits in the desert.

AGRICULTURE

LAND REDISTRIBUTION

In 1975 the central government undertook to reform land ownership in the rural areas. The largest sector of land-users is that of the small subsistence farmer. The farms are usually quite small -- about 2 hectares on average, and in the highlands they are often less than half of that -- yet they make up more than 90% of the cultivated land in the country. Farm equipment is quite simple -- a sickle, a wooden plough and a machete. Usually the farmer has a couple of oxen; seeds are hand-broadcast, and little fertilizer is used. Most of the crop is to feed members of the household, with only a small portion being sold.

The farmers who farm this land are organized into Peasant Associations. These organizations are responsible for running the local literacy campaigns and the primary schools, resolving local disputes, distributing land among their members and collecting income taxes. Everyone expected that after the reforms took place, things would improve. Instead of increased production, though, the amounts of food produced by the farmers actually declined.

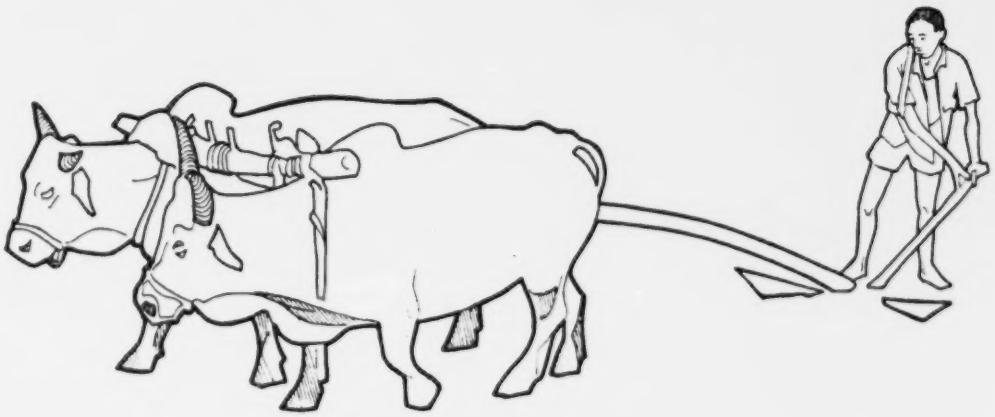
How did this happen? An Oromo farmer in Shoa province gives his explanation:

> "The government gave each family just enough land to feed itself -- but no more. We aren't allowed to hire people to help us with the work. Any produce we have left over we have to sell to the government at really low prices. Also, we can't buy or sell farm machinery privately -- our farms are too small to use machinery anyway. We use all the dung our animals produce for fuel, because firewood here in Shoa is too time-consuming to search for and too expensive to buy. If we could use the dung for fertilizer we could increase our harvests by 20%. But we can't sell anything commercially to make any money from farming or, if we do make a little profit, there is nothing to buy. So there isn't much interest in growing more than our family can use."

It could be that the government policies explained to us by Salomen Berhani could have contributed to the food shortages.

COOPERATIVES

Another form of agricultural production is the producers' cooperatives. As few as three households may pool their resources and become a cooperative. Each member contributes some land, implements and animals to be hired by the cooperative. (Each member keeps back some land for his family.) The members share the income on the basis of the work they contribute. This system is the direction the government wants to take in agricultural development but, as yet, it only plays a very small part in total production.



OXEN-DRAWN PLOUGH

Cooperatives tend to be larger than individual holdings, with each household contributing land. Also they use more advanced methods. For example, they use more fertilizer and have more work animals, and they may even have a tractor. Even with these advances their productivity is low due in part to the low prices the government is willing to pay for their produce.

VILLAGIZATION

For the cooperatives to be successful the central government thinks that a villagization program must be carried out to get the farmers organized and located close together instead of scattered throughout the countryside.

With state farms proving to be inefficient, the central government is now creating thousands of small community cooperatives. The program called villagization started in 1985 and involves moving farmers from isolated areas into central villages.

The official reason for villagization is to give the farmers better services, such as schools, clinics, clean water and electricity. However, many observers feel that the real reason is to provide more government control over the people in the countryside; the government can buy grain from the villages at very low prices, and these small communities allow the government more control over conscripting young men into the army -- a force of 300,000 soldiers which uses about 80% of Ethiopia's budget and is fighting rebels in the northern provinces of Eritrea and Tigre.

Farmers are encouraged to move to the villages in their region, with promises of social services -- which are seldom there. Sometimes those who refuse to move have their homes burned or torn down. Farmers must trek miles to the new villages and, when there, must build a new home. This situation causes a new demand for building materials, which has increased deforestation. As well, a health risk has been created by putting too many people in villages in regions where there are many contagious diseases. Harvests are much lower because the farmers have to spend so much time moving house. As well, they now must hike back to their fields, which might be as far as 10 km (7 mi.) away. The farmers also must attend political meetings.

Economists say these cooperatives could be a good method of helping the farmers. They say the farmers should be able to enter the program voluntarily. Also, the cooperatives should not have to sell their produce to the government at low, fixed prices but should be allowed to make a profit from their labour. The government, though, has ignored their advice.

The Ethiopians are protesting this villagization process, but little can be done. In the past two years, six million people have been moved, and as many as four million may have to move in 1987-88.

STATE FARMS

When the central government nationalized all land in 1975, they also took over the large estates belonging to businesses and set them up as state farms. Most of the budget for agriculture has gone to pay for these state farms. Since food production has been falling, the government has worried that there would not be enough food to feed the people in the cities (about one in five Ethiopians lives in a city), supply the army (one of the largest in Africa) and government institutions, such as hospitals. These large state farms have been introduced to provide the needed food.

Girma Abbai was the manager of a state farm in Eritrea for six years. He tells us about the farm and the problems he encountered.

"The farm I was running was 70 km (45 mi.) west of Asmara. We grew citrus fruits and vegetables -- mostly green peppers -- for export as well as rural consumption. We also grew tomatoes and processed them right at the farm site: the tomato paste was for local consumption and export. We had about 1,000 head of cattle and made 15 different types of cheese. We also sold milk to the city.

"Before nationalization, the farm had been owned by an Italian company. They used to sell every type of produce to Europe and the Middle East. But when the government nationalized the farm, it was done during the war. We were not able to carry on with the work, because we were ambushed while taking the products to the city to sell. The vegetables and fruit would rot on top of the trucks. Also, the power was cut off, and all sorts of cheese had to be destroyed because it wouldn't keep in the factory freezers. The liberation groups which did this were not doing it just to destroy the products. They do not want the military government to be successful and make money. Anything they can do to attack or harm them, they will.

"Another problem involved the farm workers. Since they were assured that they were government employees, they felt they did not have to work hard. All they had to do was be there and collect their cheques. Also there was a shortage of workers, because they did not believe in the project and did not want to be there. The working conditions were not good because the farms are in the war zones.

"But the central government was very anxious to see the project going, even though it was in a difficult situation and they were not making money. I could bring in any equipment I needed. They would give me tanks, artillery, convoys, etc. to get the product to the cities, but it would still be ambushed and destroyed by the guerrillas.

"I was very much interested in that farm and I was working very hard and doing all I could to get it going. But I was there on the project for six years and there was no month we were ever able to support ourselves - and we were one of the most successful projects.

"The central government wants to make believe there is no war going on in Eritrea and Tigre, that there is only a handful of bandits. Ethiopia has not recognized this big problem; they don't want to. They don't want the outside world to know what is going on in Ethiopia. I am a firm believer that if there had been peace in the country, there wouldn't have been this famine."

NOMADIC PASTORALISM

Another farming system is that engaged in by the nomads. This is found in the semi-arid lowland areas (see map or Land and Climate). The people include the Afar or the Danakil, the Somalis of the Ogaden, the Borana (see People), as well as many other groups.

Although some nomads now use cars and trucks, camels still serve many purposes and are very valuable. They carry the heavy loads of the nomads when they move, provide milk and occasionally meat. Recently, with rainfall being so low, herd sizes have become much smaller.

Cattle are the main form of wealth -- a status symbol -- and the most important source of food. As well, the animals can be bartered for grain in the local markets. Under normal conditions, one cow will provide enough grain to feed a family for a year. Most nomads get half their food from milk, blood and meat and half from grain.

The government sees the nomads, who wander across international boundaries, as large numbers of their citizens whom they cannot control. Usually, most nomadic groups are heavily armed; they are unruly and do not pay taxes. Also, they have more loyalty to their own ethnic group than to the central government.

The government plans to settle the nomads and organize them into producers' cooperatives. In this way they can exercise more control over them. But the nomads are unwilling to give up their long-accustomed ways of life. One worldwide expert stated: "Where settlement has been imposed on nomads compulsorily by government decree or other ways, the results have been disastrous."

In some areas where wells have been built to encourage settlement, it has resulted in overgrazing the land adding to the difficulties of the drought. Some analysts see a return to nomadic pastoralism as the best way to restore the environment.

DEFORESTATION

Ethiopian farmers, especially those in the semi-arid northern areas, have always lived in a precarious balance with their harsh environment. In recent years the balance has been disturbed. The land has not been able to meet the demands made upon it and has degenerated.

Many of the people of Tigre, Eritrea and Wollo provinces of Ethiopia are in danger of facing starvation again in 1987-88. One of the reasons for this situation is that, over the centuries, people have been cutting down trees faster than they can grow. This situation is most serious in the northern dry areas where the regrowth of shrubs and woodlands is slower than in other, more humid regions. Without tree roots to bind it, the topsoil washes away with the rains, or the soil becomes hard and, when it does rain, the water runs off, eroding the soil.

Why do the people cut the trees if it is so bad for their land? One of the main reasons is the need for fuelwood. Wood is a very important, free source of household energy -- both for cooking and warmth in the higher altitudes.

The chore of collecting firewood is mainly the job of women and children, who must spend up to 300 work-days each year gathering fuel for their household. Wood provides 93% of Ethiopia's total energy consumption.

CHILDREN GATHERING WOOD

THE DROUGHT

The loss of forests means that each year people are having to go further in search of firewood, women are spending even more time carrying water from distant sources, people who own livestock must travel even further in search of good pastures, and farmers must use shorter fallow periods before reusing their land which is becoming drier and ever less productive.

For a long time, Ethiopia's high military expenditure has not left enough money for development in the countryside of roads, power, irrigation, wells, grain storage or food processing.

When the drought occurred -- especially in Eritrea, Tigre and Wollo provinces -- it was the poor farmers on the marginal lands who first suffered.

In a rich country, if crops fail, the government will assist the farmers and buy food somewhere else. In a poor country, drought does not have to mean starvation. Governments can bring food from other parts of the country to feed the drought victims until the natural disaster has passed.

In Ethiopia, though, the people had nobody to turn to. The government seemed unable to cope with the situation. They did not even know how many people lived in the villages of the highlands. When they took a census there were nine million more people than had been estimated. Also, the central government was at war with the liberation movements in Eritrea, Tigre and Wollo -- which were the areas most heavily affected by the drought. Money which could have been used to buy food was spent on arms used to fight the rebels. The UN has been unable to bring about a ceasefire which would allow them to give support to the famine victims in war areas.

Although the Ethiopian government had been sounding the alarm about the famine for more than a year before the world became aware, it had not cut down on other spending in order to be able to give more relief aid. It continued to spend on arms purchases as well as large amounts on the anniversary celebrations of the revolution. Also because Ethiopia was allied with the Soviet Union, western governments kept their distance, giving Ethiopia less aid than any other developing nation -- $7.26 U.S. per head, compared to $659.00 U.S. given to Israel, which has a foreign capital investment 90 times greater than for Ethiopia.

Famine seldom occurs because there is no food available, but rather because when food shortages occur prices for food staples in the markets tend to rise astronomically and people cannot afford to buy the food available. Some move to the towns hoping to find work and send money home. Some sell their jewellery or tools, and then they begin to sell their livestock -- at first small animals like sheep and goats and finally their precious work animals. When everything has been sold and all the seed is gone, farm families begin to abandon their villages in search of help or food.

The first signs of famine to the outside world are when these hungry people arrive in cities or roadside camps. At this stage it is almost impossible to prevent large numbers of people from dying of starvation or related causes.

Unlike other disasters, such as earthquakes, famines do not sweep through whole communities affecting everyone. During this famine it is the very poor who have suffered. Army officers, businessmen or even merchants don't starve.

What happens to people when they are really starving? When food supplies become low, people suffer severe hunger pangs. In a few days, however, the pains go. The people now depend on their reserves of body fat for the energy they need to walk about. Depending on a person's body fat, — these reserves may last a couple of weeks. Then the body must use the energy resources contained in muscles. People become depressed and too tired to do anything. Young children begin to die. As the body weight drops, arms and legs become shrunken, and the personality may change. People may fly into a rage for little reason. As death approaches they become indifferent, not caring what is happening to them. Starvation is a wretched way to die.

Thousands of Ethiopians died quietly in the parched countryside far from any kind of help. Others, who were lucky, made it to the relief camps, many walking all the way to the Sudan. With the floods of people arriving, there was not nearly enough food or medicine to take care of them.

Only after a BBC broadcast in October 1984 was the world awakened to the Ethiopian tragedy with these words:

> "Dawn -- and as the sun breaks through the piercing chill of night on the plain outside Korem, it lights up a biblical famine, now, in the twentieth century. This place, say workers here, is the closest thing to hell on earth."

Overnight, the public in western countries began to question the policies of their governments toward Ethiopia and to demand action.

Food aid can take up to four months to reach its destination. There must be warehouses available to receive the food, trucks must be on hand to move the food across the country to the villages and relief camps, the donors must organize their schedules so that all the food does not arrive at once. Food aid can make matters worse by discouraging the local people from wanting to grow food for themselves. Who can compete with free food? Yet people must eat and be helped to produce their own food.

With Ethiopia's continuing rain shortages, food aid is necessary again in 1988, with up to seven million people threatened with starvation (UN figures). However, the key to solving Ethiopia's food problems must be self-help and self-reliance. These include projects that help the people make the best use of their land to prevent turning it into desert. They need to produce sufficient nutritious crops to feed the local rural people. Water supplies and irrigation must be improved, and health care and literacy increased.

Communities themselves must contribute to solving their own problems. Solutions imposed by outside agencies or governments don't work.

RESETTLEMENT

After a three-year study, the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization gave its report on Ethiopia. The report found that Ethiopia's highlands contain 88% of Ethiopia's 45 million people, 95% of its agricultural land that is used regularly and about two-thirds of its livestock -- which at about 70 million is the largest herd in Africa.

The area is so overcrowded that the average farmer cultivates only 0.8 hectares of land -- barely enough to live on. Often, farming is carried out on mountain slopes where erosion and deforestation have reduced topsoil from 6 m to a few centimetres (20 ft. to a couple of inches).

The UN report states: "If present trends continue, today's children could see more than one-third of the highlands incapable of being farmed, while the population trebles within their lifetimes."

The government has made the decision to resettle large numbers of people from the highland areas to other parts of the country where the land is thought to be more abundant, more fertile and less subject to drought. These programs are very expensive. Transportation must be provided not only to bring food to the people but also to move the people to the new areas of settlement. Since transport vehicles are in short supply, feeding centres have difficulty getting enough vehicles.

Once settlers are moved they must be supported, often for several years, until they can produce enough to feed themselves. Land has to be cleared, homes built, wells dug, roads constructed and a commercial and trading network set up. The government, however, is doing little for the settlers beyond giving each household two hectares of land and providing some relief assistance.

Settlers are expected to learn a new type of farming, to cope with disease (many of the new sites were not farmed before because they were in malaria-ridden areas), to build new communities and to learn the language and customs of the surrounding people. The local people are often resentful of the newcomers. They are often moved to new areas because of them or are expected to take them in and feed them.

The resettlement program is claimed to be voluntary. There is much evidence that points to this not being so. It has been reported that in the north the government does not give grain to the relief centres for weeks at a time. About a kilometre (about two-thirds of a mile) away, though, in the resettlement camps, two cooked meals a day are served. Those in relief centres are often starved into volunteering for the project. When people still refuse, families are split up and the men are forced at gunpoint into trucks or planes for the trip to resettlement areas. Thousands of refugees have left the relief camps in fear of being forcibly resettled.

Since there are other less costly alternatives to resettlement, the government appears to have political reasons for this choice. The famine is being used by the government as an opportunity to scatter those peoples of the north who oppose the central government and support local liberation groups.

RURAL LIFE

The large majority of Ethiopia's 45 million people live in the countryside as subsistence farmers or nomadic herdsmen. Most men in the highlands still cultivate the land as their ancestors did with a wooden plough pulled by a team of oxen. At harvest, after the oxen tread on the grain, it is winnowed by both men and women, who toss the grain into the wind using wooden shovels.

Women prepare all the food from scratch, cooking usually in locally produced clay pots over charcoal fires. Owing to the political situation in Ethiopia, many women have been left to cope on their own. As a result, in the Eritrean-controlled areas, hundreds of women are being taught how to plough, enabling them to carry on with the farming. Many women, though, must resort to taking their children to the feeding centres. Reasons for this are that most of the men able to work:

- are conscripted into the army of the central government
- have joined a liberation group
- are in jail for political reasons
- have migrated to avoid conscription or to earn money to send home
- were forced into government resettlement schemes and sent to the south
- were killed in one of the many conflicts.

Any younger male family members left at home spend much of their time looking after the cattle. Girls remain with their mothers doing household chores or weeding the fields. They also spend hours each day collecting firewood and water. Many of the village wells have dried up, and water either must be bought from those whose wells are still producing or must be collected from the nearest stream or pond -- usually many kilometres from the village.

Collecting enough firewood is also a major problem. This is a story told by a North American woman visiting one of the country's villages.

"I don't think it dawned on me how difficult a task the search for firewood had become until I went along with Ababa and her young brother one day. We set out in the heat of the afternoon so that we would be carrying the wood back when it was cooler. We plodded over the bare African hills that seemed all the same to me. The children chattered away, and I'd pick up the occasional word, but not enough to understand the jokes that sent them into giggles every now and then.

"It was two hours before we came upon anything that might pass for a tree -- a sickly stump that was barely hanging on to life. There were others farther on that looked a little healthier -- I pointed at them but Ababa shook her head firmly and marched on. She knew what she was doing, this girl of 12 -- if we'd cropped those trees they'd soon have ended up as stumps. When we reached a more suitable place, Ababa showed me how to cut the branches to do least harm to the tree. It took us another hour to bundle up enough to make for home, the children looking from behind like trees with legs as they bent beneath their loads. Had I taken a photo it would have served as an image of child labour to stir Western hearts to outrage but, rightly or wrongly, it would have left out their cheerful chatter.

"I'd had more than enough by the end of the first hour's walk, let alone the second, and coming upon the village in the fading light it seemed like home, not like just another object of study. I ate with Ababa's family and, as usual, once the meal was cooked the fire was allowed to die -- wood is far too precious to be used just for light.

"And so the long African night began, illuminated only by the moon and the glowing embers. I thought of the way I walk into my Western home and flip a switch here for light, another there for heat, and swore I'd never do it again without remembering Ababa and the other villagers."

MARRIAGE AND FAMILY LIFE

In many parts of the world, the structure of the family and family life are changing rapidly. This is partly due to large numbers of people moving into the cities, more countries becoming industrialized and more widespread education. In Ethiopia, however, these trends are not widespread, although the growing number of educated young people are now criticizing the strict control exercised by their parents. The traditional customs, though, are still generally adhered to, particularly in rural areas. The phenomena responsible for the changing structure of the Ethiopian family are the war (see Rural Life), the drought (see Agriculture -- Drought), and resettlement (see Resettlement).

Outside these disturbing influences, the various family systems remain stable and conservative, especially in the rural area where most of the people live. The Ethiopian family usually arranges at least the first marriage for their children, who are seldom given a voice in the decision. Marriage arrangements usually take place when the boys are 18 or 19 and the girls 15 or 16.

The two most important types of marriage are *k'urban* (church marriage) and *samaniya* (civil contract marriage). *K'urban*, considered the ideal type of marriage, is the only one that takes place in church. During the ceremony the bride and groom take communion together. This type of marriage is indissoluble and is not very common except among long-married couples who feel divorce can be ruled out. Young people are usually discouraged from establishing such a permanent bond, because it is thought that they are not mature enough to maintain the relationship. Rather than violate the sacred nature of a church marriage, they are encouraged to undertake the more easily broken and more common civil contract.

Wedding preparations are usually long and involve the whole community. A special hall or pavilion is built. It usually has no walls but has supports to hold up the roof. On the floor, green boughs or long grasses are placed. Here the festivities take place, often lasting for several days, with feasting, drinking, dancing and music.

Because the bride will go to live in her husband's community away from her family, the husband must choose two guarantors to serve as her protectors. These are usually close relatives of the groom. After the ceremonies, the couple sometimes goes to live temporarily with the husband's family, until they are ready to set up a separate home of their own, normally still in the husband's community.

MOTHER AND CHILD

On the wedding day, after feasting at the bridegroom's home, his party proceeds to the bride's home. There they feast, respect is paid to the bride's parents, the bride's guarantors are sworn to protect her, and the couple receives a blessing from the bride's parents. Among Moslems there is a reading from the Koran, the Moslem holy book, and the blessing is given by the local holy man or Moslem judge. Although Moslems may have as many as four wives at the same time, few husbands can afford more than one. Today, only chiefs and perhaps some townspeople can provide for more than one wife.

In the cities there is a tendency to follow European marriage customs, and the formal, western-style church wedding is becoming quite common.

BIRTH

A woman usually goes home to her family to give birth. Most births are attended by a midwife. A piece of iron is kept close to the mother and child, because it is believed to ward off evil spirits.

A child usually receives a given name from its mother. A child may be named after an event that occurred at birth, or reflect a virtue or personality characteristic the mother hopes the child will have. The child takes its father's first name as its family name. A person's own first name is used as North Americans use the family name; it is not thought proper to address an Ethiopian by his last or father's name only. When Ethiopians address each other formally, both names are used, preceded by the title equivalent of Mr., Mrs. or Miss. A married woman keeps her maiden name and simply changes her title from *woizerit* (Miss) to *woizero* (Mrs.). For example, a couple has a baby girl. The mother gives the child the name Hereity. Her father's name is Hadgu Tesfagaber. The child's name becomes Hereity Hadgu. After marriage her name remains the same, but her friends now call her *Woizero* Hereity (Mrs. Hereity).

POSITION OF WOMEN

A major step was taken in Ethiopia when land was given to women after 1974. Prior to this reform, women had been almost totally dependent on their husbands and had the threat of divorce over them. It is now claimed that wife-beating has decreased considerably, as the husband now thinks twice, knowing that if his wife leaves him she can keep a share of the farm.

Discrimination against women has been deeply rooted for centuries. Although they do most of the physically hard jobs, such as carrying water and firewood, grinding corn, gardening, cooking and washing, they have not had much say in important family decisions. One job that women were not allowed to do was to plough the fields. This was because it was believed that their inferiority would result in poor cultivation and therefore a low yield. Now, in the liberated areas of Tigre and Eritrea, women are learning to plough. They are also finding other jobs outside the home. One-third of the liberation fighters are women. Like the men, they work seven days a week for no pay. Women are also nurses in the clinics, barefoot doctors, and mechanics on the convoys.

INDUSTRY

HISTORY

"From cleverness of hand comes serfdom; from cleverness of mouth, master." This proverb of the Amhara people illustrates the disdain they felt for people who made things with their hands. Throughout history, the dominant ethnic groups in Ethiopia have been warriors, administrators, herdsmen or farmers. They have left crafts, industry and trade to minority groups or foreigners -- people they looked down on. This lack of interest in commerce produced shortages in skilled labour. This has been a major handicap to industrial development in Ethiopia.

In a land where 80-90% of the people have been subsistence farmers, the needs of the people have been supplied by families themselves -- for example, their weaving of baskets or cloth -- or by local craftspeople, who made pots, carpets, jewellery, etc. The few manufactured consumer goods needed by city people were brought in by camel or mule caravans (see Land). Also, because of Ethiopia's isolation they had little contact with the western world which was rapidly industrializing.

WEAVING BASKETS

INDUSTRIAL HANDICAPS

Other factors which have hampered industrialization in Ethiopia have been:

- lack of adequate transportation and communication facilities. Ethiopia's only ports are in Eritrea, which has not always been a part of the country. The mountainous terrain has hampered the building of roads and railway systems, leaving the people in large areas unable to get their products to markets. Many traders still use camels, mules and donkeys.
- lack of fuel and electrical power. Wood has been widely used, mainly in making charcoal for smelting. This, however, has led to the rapid deforestation of the country.
- lack of education. In a country where illiteracy is high and contact with modern technology very recent, people were uninterested in technological advances or in technical education.
- lack of funds. With most Ethiopians involved in agriculture, barter is a common practice and savings are small. As a result, there is little money to invest in business or industry.
- almost all of the country's industry being centered around its two largest cities -- Addis Ababa, the capital, and Asmara, the Eritrean capital -- where the war has affected the industrial output.
- The central government has nationalized industries. Money for their maintenance and further development of industry must come from government sources, which include:
    1. taxation (This limits the buying power of the people.)
    2. foreign trade (Prices paid for the agricultural goods sold by countries such as Ethiopia are falling, while the prices they must pay for manufactured goods are rising sharply. Twenty years ago 21 tons of sugar were needed to pay for one tractor. Today, about 60 tons of sugar are needed. Ethiopia depends on coffee exports for almost 70% of its foreign exchange.)
    3. foreign grants or loans (Usually, donor countries and organizations put conditions on their aid, not allowing those receiving the aid to choose the projects they feel are most important for their growth.)

AGRICULTURE AND INDUSTRY

Agriculture and industry can no longer be thought of as being separate. The health of the manufacturing industry depends on the farmers' producing more cotton, sugar, coffee, cattle, etc. for factories to process. This in turn depends on sufficient supplies from industry of such things as farm tools, pesticides and fertilizers. These products are necessary to increase the farmers' income, which gives them the buying power to purchase manufactured goods.

On the other hand, many people feel that all of Ethiopia's land that can be cultivated should be planted in food crops, such as grains and vegetables, to feed the people a nutritious, affordable diet, with legumes to replace nitrogen in soils eroded by chemical use.

Most of the manufacturing in Ethiopia is in processing agricultural products. These include:

- Food and beverages -- sugar, canned meat and tomatoes, flour, oil seeds, dairy products, beer, wines, mineral water, lemonade, tea and coffee
- Textiles -- cotton yarns and cloth (Ethiopians use an average of 3 kg of fabric each year; Ghanaians use 18 kg), sheeting, blankets, rope and twine, synthetic cloth, sweaters and other knit goods
- Tobacco
- Leather tanning and shoes

Other industries include:

- Salt production
- Wood -- furniture-making
- Building materials -- cement, bricks
- Paper-making
- Printing
- Petroleum (refining)
- Chemical production
- Metals
- Machinery

SORTING COFFEE BEANS

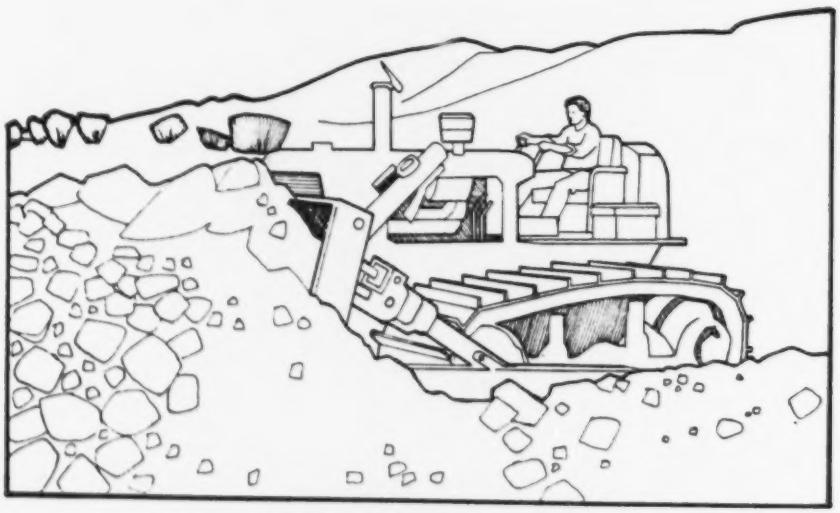
CRAFTS

In spite of the emphasis on building modern factories, the economy is still dependent on small and cottage industries. They employ six times more people than large-scale industries.

Cottage industries usually employ one person or a family; they rarely hire outside labour. The production is carried out on street corners or in people's own homes or back yards. They need little money to start. The earnings of each person are very low, but they do provide employment for many people. Unemployment is a major problem -- in cities it is about 20% and rising.

RURAL INDUSTRY

Economists say Ethiopia has more chance to progress economically if industry is more dispersed throughout the country, thus creating more rural development. New factories could be near their source of supply of raw materials -- fruit, vegetables, cattle, etc. -- and near the consumers in the countryside whom they would sell to. This would lower transportation costs so that goods would cost the rural people less. Money needed for small-scale rural industries would be less than that for large, city factories. The people in different areas of Ethiopia could benefit financially from local industries, rather than only those in the main cities. Also, rural industries would help relieve unemployment in regional areas, which would help lessen conflicts and resentments in the different regions, perhaps helping to make Ethiopia a more united country.



EARTH-MOVING EQUIPMENT

CITIES

ADDIS ABABA

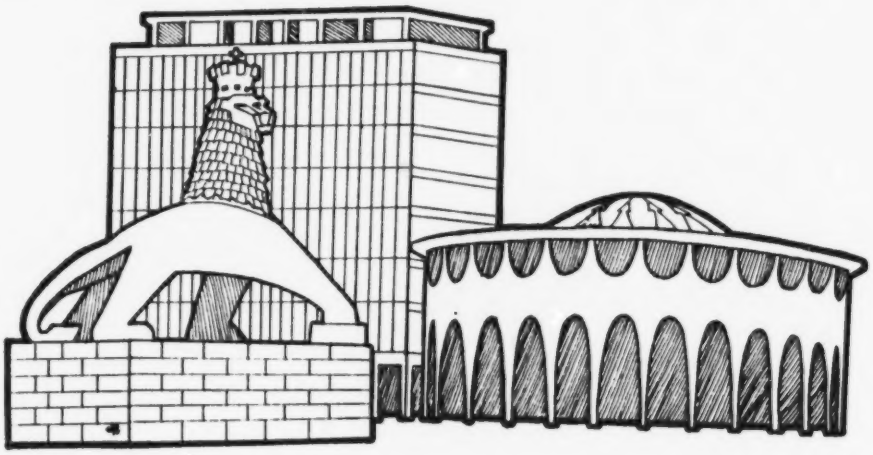
The capital city of Ethiopia, Addis Ababa (New Flower), spreads over a large, hilly area in the mountains of the central highlands at an altitude of 2,500 m (8,200 ft.). The climate is pleasant, with temperatures between 15.5° and 27° C (60° and 80° F.) most of the year. The skies are generally sunny, except during the rainy season from July to September, which is thought of as "winter". At this time, space heaters, either electric or fuel-burning, are used by many to keep warm. The average rainfall in Addis is usually 1 m (40 in.) per year. The rains, however, have been less over the last few years, and as a result the city is much dustier than usual. Addis is today one of Africa's largest cities, with a population of about one and a half million.

The people of Addis represent all the different ethnic groups of the country. The Amharas probably outnumber other groups, as this region of the country is where they have traditionally lived. The Oromo from the surrounding country, Tigreans from the north, Somalis from the desert, and many more have come to live in this cosmopolitan city. Although people working in the city usually wear western or European-style clothing, Addis has a large transitory population of officials, traders, priests and visitors, many of whom wear traditional clothes.

The architecture of Addis is a confusion of modern concrete and glass office and apartment buildings, and small, older buildings, along with the traditional tin-roofed *tukuls* (homes) (see Housing) of the average people.

Mules, donkeys, horses and other livestock mingle with vehicles such as Land Rovers, military trucks, Mercedes, taxis, Fiats, motorcycles and bicycles. This traffic manoeuvers along the broad boulevards and through narrow, rocky sidestreets. With the high cost of petroleum products over the past few years, the number of vehicles has somewhat diminished.

Many modern hotel chains, such as the Hilton, are represented in Addis. It is also the headquarters for several African and international organizations. It is a diplomatic centre also, with embassies from the world over. Modern Coptic cathedrals, churches, mosques and synagogues are found throughout the city.



LION OF JUDAH STATUE, ADDIS ABABA

Residents of Addis can spend their leisure time in many ways. There is a major football stadium, and large parks, where families go mainly on weekends. Young people often go to cafes for coffee and lively discussions after dinner or after seeing a film. There are theatres where Ethiopian plays are performed, although the government often censors the plays' contents. Art exhibitions are held in public buildings, museums and private galleries.

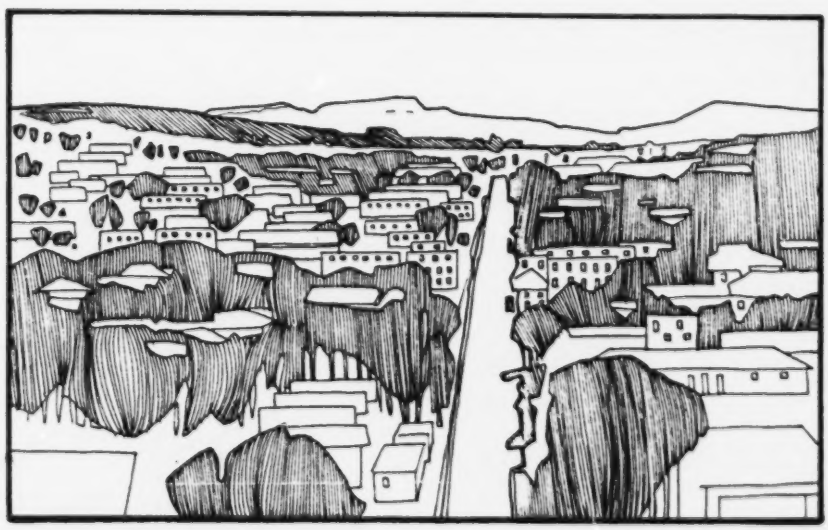
Although Addis has department stores, supermarkets and sophisticated specialty shops, the majority of the people shop at the *mercato* (market). One such market in Addis is reputed to be Africa's largest. As in other big bazaar-style markets, special sections are devoted to different products. One row of stalls may offer local and imported fabrics such as brilliant brocades. Other stalls offer silver filigree jewellery, spices or clothes. Around the perimeter of the market is a covered arcade -- passageways with shops. In the shade of the arcade sit rows of tailors at their treadle sewing machines. Shoppers bring fabrics they bought in the market to have them made into the latest fashions or the more traditional dress.

Around the turn of the century, King Menelik II (see History) introduced to Addis the eucalyptus tree -- a fast-growing tree which flourished in the highland climate. He had it planted everywhere, giving Addis its wooded, green appearance. Over the years the eucalyptus has supplied the fuel and building poles for the capital, and the blue smoke from its burning wood has given the city a distinctive pleasant smell. This offsets the odour from the open rivers carrying sewage through the city. In the last decade, the revolutionary government has had many of the trees cut down to reduce hiding places because of the fear of resistance groups infiltrating the city.

Although the country has been declared a republic, military presence still makes itself known with a strict curfew imposed at midnight. Anyone entering a public building, such as a post office or ministry office, is searched, just as people in your country sometimes are when they take an airplane. People are also reminded of the government with stone sculptures of Marx, Lenin and Engels in the central square of the city, and pictures of Mengistu, the new president, in all public buildings.

ASMARA

An hour's flight from Addis brings you to Asmara, the capital of Eritrea and the country's second-largest city, with a population of almost 500,000. Asmara receives less than 51 cm (20 in.) of rain a year, and at the lower altitude of 2,286 m (7,500 ft.) it is a little warmer than the capital.



ASMARA

Like Addis, it is a young city, dating from the 1880s, when Italy colonized Eritrea. With its Italian influence of palm-lined boulevards, sidewalk cafes and Mediterranean-style villas, it was known as Little Rome.

The presence of a large Roman Catholic cathedral also shows the Italian influence, which lasted for 50 years. Unlike Addis, the city shows evidence of planning, with zones set up for different purposes. The waterways carrying the sewage are covered, and until the 1970s the streets were washed each morning.

Although liberation groups claim to control 85% of Eritrea, Ethiopia controls a largely coastal zone which includes Asmara. The war in Eritrea has been going on for more than 25 years now; however, there is not a lot of evidence of it in Asmara. Many bullet holes are found in buildings, but not many buildings have been bombed. Often you see people on the street who have lost an arm or leg or are bandaged or on crutches.

The amount of electricity has been reduced since one of the dams supplying electricity broke down. Now that many of Asmara's factories have been shut down or moved by the central government, there is generally enough electrical power for home use. People suffer from a severe water shortage. The dam built 20 years ago to supply water to the city has apparently filled up with silt, causing the shortage. This has resulted in the need for many people to purchase their water.

DIRE DAWA

Dire Dawa is a ten-hour train, bus or car ride or a two-hour flight from Addis. The city, capital of Hararge province, lies in the hot, humid lowlands below the escarpment of the Eastern Plateau.

Situated on the rail line linking Addis to Djibouti, Dire Dawa is a trading centre. There are more Oromo here than other groups, but the Afar and Somalis come here to trade and carry on their business. Trade in sheep, horses, hides, corn, sugar, sorghum and barley is active; coffee, however, is the most remunerative. Cement-making is the main industry in the area.

The buildings in Dire Dawa are mainly concrete and brick of modern design. These include government buildings, schools, hospitals and churches. The city has a small zoo, art galleries and theatres.

HOUSING

RURAL

Since people in Ethiopia tend to spend much of their time outdoors, their homes are usually not elaborate, but functional, made of the building materials at hand. These traditional dwellings tend to be cool in the hot, dry season and yet warm in the rainy, cool season.

The typical homes in the Ethiopian highland are circular dwellings called *tukuls*. In some areas, however, the homes are square or rectangular. Whatever the shape, though, the walls are usually made of strong sticks set close together into the ground. Poles are bound horizontally to the vertical poles about 60 cm (2 ft.) apart. This forms a frame, which is usually covered inside and out with a plaster of mud and straw.

The cone-shaped roof is thatched with straw and slanted so that the rains run off easily, leaving the shelter dry. In the north, where there is less rainfall, the roofs are flatter, and stone is often used as a building material.

Homes seldom have windows or chimneys. The smoke escapes through a narrow opening at the top of a wall. Cooking is often done on a wood or charcoal fire and involves a lot of smoke as well as the strong smell of spices. As a result, kitchens are often in a small shelter away from the main living quarters. Several buildings may be grouped together to form a family compound bordered by a small fence used more to show the demarcation of the property rather than for protection.

TUKULS

70

Most households keep cows, sheep and chickens. They are often protected inside the home in its outer areas at night.

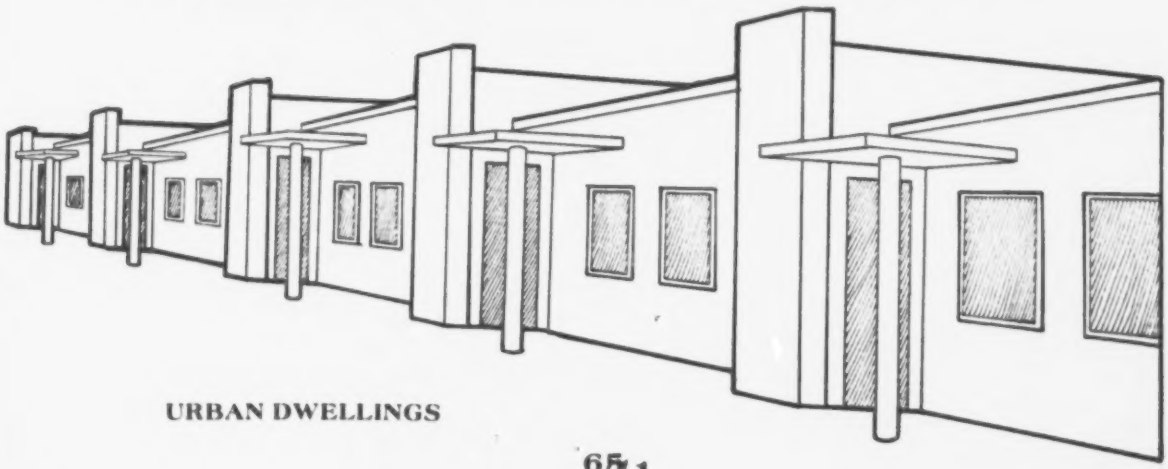
Furnishings are usually limited to a few low stools and a wicker table for eating from, as well as beds along the outer walls. The beds are usually low shelves covered with hides or blankets. Limited floor space makes wall hooks or pegs practical, as extra clothes, water containers, tools, etc. can be hung up. Some families can afford to cover the floors with furs or carpets.

URBAN

In towns and cities there are rows of attached one-room dwellings built of plaster over a wood frame, with corrugated metal roofs. Behind the rooms is usually a small area for cooking and for keeping chickens. These areas are often rented by the labourers working in towns. Another form of housing using the same construction is detached and may have an upper story surrounded by a veranda, which can be reached by an outside staircase.

In the larger cities there are modern European-style housing facilities, such as highrise apartments, bungalows and large homes with extensive gardens. However, most of the accommodation is similar to the *tukul* found in the countryside -- the only difference being metal roofs.

Since the 1974 revolution, people have been allowed to own only one house. Before 1974, some people had as many as four houses; they could make a profit by renting out the rooms. Under the new laws, people with money put it into the bank rather than invest it in housing. As a result of this, along with the large number of people moving into the cities, there is an acute housing shortage, especially in the capital, Addis Ababa.



URBAN DWELLINGS

FOOD

What is your favourite food? Hamburgers and fries? Lasagne? Steak? Chinese or Mexican food? In North America we have many different choices. In Ethiopia the favourite food is the one eaten every day for lunch and dinner. It is *injera* and *wat*.

What is *waf*? It is a spicy stew. It usually contains some form of protein -- chicken, meat, hard-boiled eggs -- or pulses such as peas, beans or lentils. Because beef is expensive for Ethiopians -- costing 5 BIR or $5 Ethiopian a kilo (about $2.50 U.S.) -- most families cannot afford it. Other ingredients include vegetables such as onions, potatoes and pumpkin. Green leafy vegetables are rarely eaten. The stew is seasoned with berberi, a fiery pepper seasoning which may include pimiento, ginger, garlic, black pepper, cloves, cinnamon sticks, cardamom and coriander, among others.

Injera, the Ethiopian bread and accompaniment to wat, is commonly made from the grain *teff*. It is grown only in Ethiopia and is preferred by most Ethiopians. Bread made from *teff* will keep fresh for at least three days, whereas bread made from the flour of other grains such as maize, other types of millet or barley, stays fresh only one day. The dough for *injera* is fermented from one to three days, thinned with water and poured like batter from a pitcher onto a circular clay griddle about 46 cm (18 in.) in diameter. The griddle is then covered and the bread is baked in a few minutes by steaming. *Injera* is usually about one centimetre (1/4 in.) thick and is spongy with tiny air holes; it has a slightly sour flavour.

Talla, a homemade barley beer, is a popular drink with the spicy food. *T'aj* is a wine made from honey.

THE MEAL

At an Ethiopian meal hands are washed before and after. The food is served on a small, round, basket-woven serving table called a *masob*. During the meal, pieces of *injera* are torn off and used to scoop up the *wat* or stew. Only the right hand is used for eating.

The Christian, Islamic and Judaic religions have influenced Ethiopian eating habits. Each religion has its own butcher and neither eats the meat slaughtered by the other. The religions also prohibit eating pork. Also, the extensive number of fast days may contribute to the undernutrition of the average person.

FAMILY EATING FROM A MASOB

COFFEE

Guests are always treated hospitably -- no matter how unexpected. When a guest arrives, the hostess begins the ceremony of making coffee. Out of respect for the coffee, the atmosphere of the home must be tranquil, and children are often sent outside to play. First the coffee beans are selected; the largest, ripest, whole beans are best. They are placed in a shallow pan and fried or roasted. The hostess then grinds them in a mortar, perhaps using an iron bar as a pestle. The rich, dark brown powder is then put into a long-necked, clay coffee pot with the water. This combination, which sometimes contains pepper or ginger, is placed on the coals. When the coffee boils, it foams up and out of the spout. It is caught in a cup and put back into the pot several times before the coffee is considered ready. The coffee is then poured in a stream into the waiting small cups which may contain sugar or honey. The cups are then passed around, while incense is burned and everyone enjoys the conversation.

DRESS

Nowadays, Ethiopians living in the larger towns and cities normally dress in Western-style clothing. Although European-type ready-made fashions are generally available in the rural shops and markets, most people in the countryside do not have the money to buy them. Also, these fashions are not practical for their lifestyle, though many combine more modern garments with their traditional clothing.

SHAMMA

The most important traditional garment among the highland peoples is the *shamma*, a shawl about three metres (10 feet) long. It is draped around the upper half of the body and sometimes the head, and is usually made of cotton, either homespun or manufactured. For more warmth, a double *shamma*, called a *kutta*, is worn during the rainy season. To further protect themselves against the cold, both men and women wear the *barnos*, a hooded woolen cloak shaped like a tent.

Under these outergarments, men dress in white cotton trousers or white jodhpurs, tight-fitting from knee to ankle. A cotton shirt is worn outside the trousers. Sometimes bush suits or jackets are worn. A bush jacket is a long cotton jacket with four patch pockets and a belt made of the same material. They are usually khaki, green or gray.

Women usually wear the *shamma* over a *k'amis*, a cotton dress with a full skirt ranging from knee- to ankle-length. The Amharic and Tigrean women usually wear white. For more festive occasions the borders of the *shamma* and skirt are colourfully embroidered. Women of other ethnic groups use brightly-coloured cotton cloth for their clothing. Reds and saffrons are among their favourite colours.

GALLA WOMAN

People in the hot, low-lying areas wear fewer clothes. Often the garments they wear are made from leather provided by their cattle.

Women in the various regions of the country do their hair in different styles. Galla women often wear their hair drawn back into two buns behind the ears; others braid their hair in cornrows. The styles, though, are as numerous as those of women in your country.

HEALTH

NUTRITION

Ethiopia has many health problems that have to be solved. The country's life expectancy at about 40.4 years for men and 43.6 years for women is one of the lowest in the world. The most pressing problem Ethiopia faces is malnutrition, mainly created by the drought and war. In 1987-88 alone almost seven million people were at risk of dying of starvation. Even if they manage to receive enough grain from foreign agencies and governments, to stay alive, nutritional diseases such as kwashiorkor and marasmus occur. They are caused by insufficient protein and/or calories and affect mainly children. Lack of vitamins A and C is also common and results in skin, eye and gum problems as well as scurvy. Malnutrition also weakens people so that they are more susceptible to colds, pneumonia, tuberculosis and diarrhoea.

Children often die from losing too much water after getting serious diarrhoea. Many of them can be helped by replacing the lost fluid. Oral Rehydration Solution has saved many lives. It provides measured amounts of salt and sugar, which should be mixed with clean water -- often difficult to come by. This solution replaces the lost fluid and temporarily helps the child.

Nutritional problems may be compounded by religious fasts. Christians fast at least two days each week and on other occasions, making up two and a half months each year. During these times, no animal products are to be eaten. The longest Moslem fast is Ramadan, during which nobody eats between sunrise and sunset for the month.

DISEASES

Other serious medical problems are caused by lack of water or lack of clean water. Families and their livestock often use the same water supply. Other medical problems include cholera, bilharzia and venereal disease, as well as snake and scorpion bites. In some lowland areas 80% of the people have malaria.

The government's aim is to emphasize preventing disease rather than just curing it, and they are trying to bring medical care to the people living in rural areas and the poor in the cities. According to the government, 86 hospitals have been built since the revolution, and the number of clinics and health centres has increased extensively. However, because of the wars being fought in Eritrea, Tigre and Wollo provinces, many of the hospital beds, medical services and much of the available medicine are used for wounded soldiers.

MEDICAL DRUGS

Ethiopia manufactures very little of the medicine it needs for its large population. As a result, the country continues to suffer from a lack of drugs and medical equipment, which have to be imported from other countries at high cost. This shortage often results in people resorting to the black market to get medicine. When a person becomes ill, medical advice may or may not be used to determine the type of care needed. Since the people have seen dramatic healing results from injected antibiotics, this is often their choice, whether or not it can cure the problem. So they buy the drugs they have decided on -- if they can afford them -- from stalls in the public market. If necessary, drugs are then taken to an "injector" or "dresser", who will administer the injection for them. Lack of sterilization facilities can result in the needles causing abscesses or other skin infections.

ERITREA

The liberation groups in Eritrea are also emphasizing preventative medicine. In the areas controlled by Eritreans, clinics have been set up in tents often hidden so that they will not be a target during air raids. At dusk the people come to the clinic to receive treatment from the "barefoot doctors". Many of these doctors are actually paramedics with about four months of training, regular updating and many years of experience. Some of the barefoot doctors are responsible for looking after the nomads, who move about twice a year. The "doctors" follow them and deal with everything from malaria, traucoma and dysentery to the illnesses related to malnutrition. Barefoot doctors also teach child care, hygiene and first aid.

In the rural areas, where there is usually fewer than one physician for every 76,000 people, traditional healers are respected and often consulted. Traditional medicine is often linked to religious beliefs. The *dabtaras* -- unofficial church leaders -- are believed to have spiritual healing abilities. The use of holy water, amulets and incantations (chants) are thought to be protective against the "evil eye" and the *zar*, which are thought to be evil spirits that can cause birth defects, transmit diseases and cause madness.

TREATING A FAMINE VICTIM

Other healers use herbal medicines made from leaves, roots and bark to bring about cures. Burning and bloodletting, as well as surgical procedures such as male and female circumcision, and the cutting of tendons for rheumatism, are widely practised. These procedures often result in medical complications.

Good health in Ethiopia will only be achieved when the people have enough clean water, as well as an adequate diet and basic health care services. Also, with peace, a more productive agricultural system could set Ethiopian people on the road to better health.

EDUCATION

HISTORY

Only fourteen years ago, before the revolution, 90% of the Ethiopian people could not read or write. Let's look at the reasons for this high illiteracy rate.

- Many of the people in Ethiopia are subsistence farmers living in isolation in the mountains, or are nomads, not settled in one place.
- There was a teacher shortage because not enough Ethiopians were educated. European or North American teachers were not attracted because the salaries were low and the living conditions in rural areas were difficult.
- The clergy and the monarchic aristocracy who ruled the country did not want modern education to introduce non-traditional, foreign ways.
- There are many languages and dialects in Ethiopia, many of which have no written alphabet.
- More than half the population did not speak Amharic, the language of instruction, and many boycotted the schools in protest against being forced to learn the Amharic language and culture.
- Many of the people, being traditional farmers, did not see the importance of receiving the Western education that was offered in the schools.

Although the numbers of schools and teachers have increased considerably since the revolution, Ethiopia still has a long way to go to educate her people. A thirteen-year-old, grade 8, junior secondary student in Gondar province tells us about her school experiences.

"*Tinia Esteline* ["Greetings" in Amharic]. My name is Saba Micheal. This will give me a chance to practise my English. I've been studying it in school since grade 3 and, after I entered junior secondary in grade 7, all our texts and classes have been in English.

"Aside from English and Amharic, which is the language I learned when I first came to school, I also study math, science, history and geography, as well as art, music, crafts and sports. My favourite subjects are science and music -- I really enjoy singing.

"My school is a long, brick building divided into classrooms which open directly outdoors. We all wear uniforms; ours are green, which I suppose is better than the khaki that other provinces have. All the girls wear short-sleeved, cotton dresses, and the boys wear shirts and shorts. I would prefer to wear traditional dress, but I guess this makes us more equal.

"One of my favourite times in the school year is Parents Day. My mother and father come to school to watch all the sports events. All I ever win is the egg race. The prizes are usually pens, pencils or other school supplies. Anyway, we all enjoy the day and go home tired.

"Next month we start our three-month vacation which lasts over the rainy season. Last year, though, it hardly rained at all, and many people died or had to walk to relief centres. My father works in town as a merchant, and we didn't go hungry. When our family slaughtered a sheep or cow, we always made sure everyone in the neighbourhood shared with us, especially during festivals.

"Next term I hope I can go to senior secondary. My father doesn't really approve of girls being educated, but my mother belongs to an organization promoting women's rights. I think she'll be able to persuade my father to let me continue studying.

"I haven't decided yet whether to take the commercial route and study business English, accounting and typing, or take more academic subjects and specialize in science.

"Someday, maybe, I can go to university like my brother, Tamrat. He is studying engineering at the University of Addis Ababa -- it is one of their specialties. He doesn't pay for tuition or books, and he receives a small amount of money from the government each month for his room and board. Also, since he lives a long way from Addis, his airfare is paid when he has to return home. When he graduates, he'll start working for the government right away."

LITERACY

The new government is also making advances in adult education. Since 1980, people have been gradually accepting the idea of how important it is to be able to read and write. Now a status symbol is to be able to display a red-pen sticker on the front door of your home. This symbol announces that all the residents over eight years old can read and write. A black sticker shows that one or more household members are literate. All this is part of a nationwide literacy campaign which has already raised literacy from 10% in 1977 to 61% in 1987. The goal is to make Ethiopia literate by the year 2000.

STUDENT STUDYING

Literacy classes are conducted in 15 different languages. Classes can be seen being held under shady trees, along river banks or in schools. Most classes take place in the early morning or in the evening after work. Some women apparently threatened to leave their husbands unless they could attend classes with them.

In order to encourage people to keep up their new language skills, UNICEF has provided the Ethiopian Ministry of Education with funds to produce newsletters and pamphlets on subjects of interest to the Ethiopian people.

EDUCATION IN ERITREA

Much of Eritrea is controlled by liberation groups who are fighting for independence from the central government. Schooling in the areas controlled by Eritreans is often difficult because any movement during the day might attract bombing by the central government, which wants Eritrea to remain part of Ethiopia. People, therefore, cannot leave their homes. Despite this, the liberation groups have their own Ministry of Education. Their motto is: "All Knowledge to the People". The aim of education here is to link theory with practice in order to bring about positive changes in society.

For example, in many of the schools, vegetable gardens have been introduced. In some nomad communities children have been taught to cultivate small gardens using irrigation. Nomad families who once had looked down on farming now have set up small irrigated gardens, thus improving their diets with the grains and vegetables they grow. Students also grow products such as sesame or sorghum, which are then sold in order to purchase school supplies for poorer students.

Students also help the community in weeding, tilling land, repairing buildings and other manual labour. These projects are designed to allow the school to set an example for the community.

Adult education emphasizes literacy, providing short courses for nomads, as well as programs encouraging women to participate in village activities.

Since thousands of Eritreans live as refugees in Sudan, schools have been established there by Eritreans. They encourage people to keep their national identity and to teach skills that would help the people earn a living.

THE ARTS

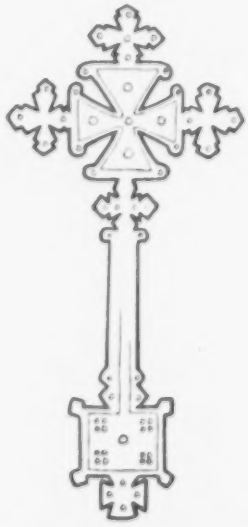
How are the arts a part of the daily lives of average Ethiopian people? As 85% of the population lives in rural areas, let's take a look at a few of the artistic forms that enhance their lives.

THE CHURCH

As most Amharas, Tigreans and Oromo are devout, practising Christians, they usually attend their local parish church at least twice a week. As they enter the church they see paintings depicting scenes from the Bible, painted in rich, deep hues in the Ethiopian traditional style. Rather than showing things realistically, Ethiopian artistic convention dictates that the size of a person depends on their importance: a king will be drawn large and a farmer small, despite their position in the picture. Also, things are not drawn to scale: an eye, because of its importance, may be larger than life. Christians are shown full-face with two eyes, while "enemies of the faith" are shown in profile. There are no human or animal sculptures in the church, as it is thought that their presence would indicate idol worship.

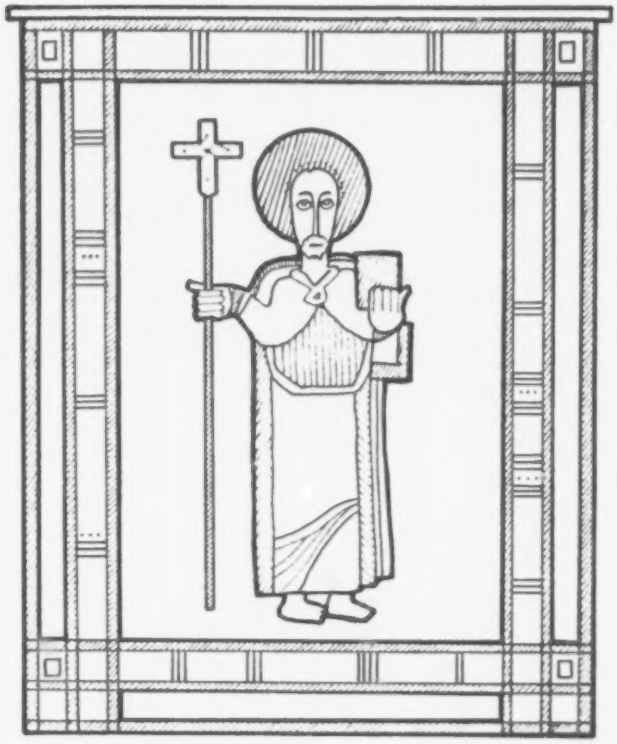
The Ethiopian cross is called a *maskal* and is usually handcrafted for the church out of brass, silver, gold or wood. There are many different designs; massive but very intricate ones are carried by the priests at religious ceremonies.

Some church music in its present form was arranged in the sixth century by a deacon named Yared. According to legend, he learned a system for writing music in heaven, where he was said to be taken by angels. The songs he collected and composed are still played, sung and danced to today. Religious chanting is done in three styles: on feast days the chant is light and melodic; there is a plain, medium style; and a somber, slow style for funerals, Lent and important fasts.



MASKAL (CROSS)

The main instruments in the church are the drum and the *sistrum*. Drums are either the *nagarit*, a large, barrel-shaped instrument, 1 to 1.5 m (3 to 5 ft.) in length, with skins stretched over the two ends, or the *kabaro*, made of a wooden bowl with a skin stretched over one end. The sistrum is a percussion instrument made of a thin metal frame with numerous metal wires or rods on which metal disks slide and produce a jingling sound.



MANUSCRIPT ILLUSTRATION, ST. MARK

Also found in the church are lavishly decorated manuscripts. They contain stories about the lives of saints or poems on religious subjects. Often the opening lines of the text are written in red; the script usually is in black. The pages may be 35 x 35 cm (14 x 14 in.) or more. The illustrations may take up entire pages and are combined with the text. The best manuscripts are on goatskin; those less valuable are written on sheepskin. They are often bound between wooden boards covered with tooled leather.

EVERYDAY ART

In everyday life, Ethiopian art is embodied in their decorative jewellery. Among Christians, crosses are frequently worn on cords about the neck. Other ornaments such as earrings, necklaces, rings, bracelets and anklets are beautifully designed and handcrafted. Other decorative arts are found in the leather work on saddles, harnesses and belts. Baskets made with dyed grasses and fibres are often beautiful as well as useful. Embroidery is another decorative art; it often covers the borders of skirts or *shammas*.

ETHIOPIAN JEWELLERY

Music plays an important part in the lives of Ethiopians. Boys guarding the cattle often play the *washint*, a simple flute with four holes, about 51 cm (20 in.) long. Its bubbling sound suggests running water, and is supposed to calm and attract cattle and sheep. Folksongs may be hummed by a farmer ploughing his fields or by his wife doing her many chores. Or perhaps a popular folksong is played, sung and danced to by everyone at a local festival, a wedding or the birth of a child.

There are several different types of folksongs:
1) The *zaffran* -- simple songs of the joys and sorrows encountered in everyday life. They are danced by men and women together, accompanied by a small drum and handclapping. Verses are made up and words and music change as the peoples' lives change and new situations develop.
2) The *fukara* -- a boasting dance performed by a man with a stick or rifle held horizontally above his shoulders. Each warrior who follows tries to outdo those before him.
3) The *mousho* -- sung on funeral occasions, usually composed and sung by women. Telling of the good qualities of the person who died, the songs are accompanied by handclapping.

Dancing usually accompanies music and singing; it often reflects the different ethnic groups performing. People of the highlands are often graceful and restrained, whereas people in the hotter, humid areas are more vigorous and expressive.

Since most of the people in rural Ethiopia could not read until recently (see Education), people expressed themselves through the spoken word. They place much emphasis on witty, clever stories with complex double-meanings. Many know the stories of the Kebra Nagast (Glory of the Kings). This is considered the most important work of Ethiopian literature; it is a collection of old legends telling the story of the visit of the Queen of Sheba to King Solomon and the birth of their son Menelik, the first Emperor of the Ethiopian dynasty. Combining history, symbolism and parable, the work played an important part in justifying the authority of Ethiopian kings of the line of Solomon.

In the cities people are much further removed from the folk arts but have more access to the arts that blend European influence with Ethiopian styles. These include professional performances in theatre, plays, dances, symphonies, operas, radio and television. They combine American, European and Indian cultures. City dwellers also have access to art not only in galleries but also in public buildings, which house outstanding works of art created by Ethiopian artists with international recognition. These include Afewerk Tekle, who did the mosaics for St. George Cathedral in Addis Ababa and the stained-glass windows for Africa Hall.

LEISURE

Leisure time in Ethiopia is usually spent with friends or relatives. Women spend their leisure time visiting one another just to chat, or with their family knitting, sewing or weaving baskets. They rarely have much leisure time though. Men tend to go out more. They seldom take their wives or families. In towns and cities they often go to cafes, restaurants or movies.

SOCCER PLAYER

Young men are very interested in soccer, which is called football there. It was introduced into Ethiopia by the Italians in the 1930s. All the larger cities have stadiums where matches are played between semi-professional and professional teams. Football fans eagerly follow the Africa Cup, especially when played in Addis. The World Cup comes to Ethiopia by satellite.

In sports, Ethiopia has gained international recognition in the Olympic marathon with Abebe Bikila. He is the only man to have won the Olympic marathon race twice. Abebe was raised in a village in the highlands just north of the capital. He never had the advantages of professional trainers, but he was used to running long distances at high altitudes. He was 27 years old when he won at the Olympic Games in Rome in 1960. People were astonished at his victory, because he ran the whole way barefoot. In 1964 at the Tokyo Olympics he won his second gold medal when he ran the fastest marathon to that time. Abebe was promoted to captain in the emperor's bodyguard and became an athletic instructor, until his career was cut short by an automobile accident in 1969.

FESTIVALS

Ethiopia has developed its own calendar. Their New Year begins on our September 11. They have 12 months of 30 days each, plus one short month of five days (six days in leap year). This extra month -- called *Pagamen*, meaning "addition" in Greek -- comes at what is usually the end of the rainy season and introduces the New Year. New Year's Eve is celebrated in many different ways throughout the country, but most include variations on a feast, with music, singing and dancing.

One of Ethiopia's most colourful and popular festivals is called *Maskal*. It occurs in the early New Year with the return of the sun after the rains and the blossoming of the gold and orange *maskal* daisies. *Maskal* means cross, and the festival remembers the time in the fourth century when St. Helena, mother of the Roman Emperor Constantine, found the Cross on which Christ was crucified.

On the eve of this festival, a *demera* is built. First, the governor of each town or village sets up a large pole in an open space. The people bring their own poles decorated with *maskal* daisies and lean them on the central pole to make a pyramid. At dusk the governor, priests and clergy, along with a procession of townspeople, circle the *demera* three times. Then it is set aflame and the people enjoy singing, dancing and feasting into the night. On the following day, *Maskal*, people draw a cross on their foreheads with the charcoal from the dead fires, continue feasting and spend the day visiting and celebrating.

Various saints' days are celebrated throughout the year. At these times, as on all holy days, work stops, and clean *shammas* are put on to attend church services, where the *tabot* (see Religion) is taken from the church and carried in processions, with dancing and singing.

Although Christmas is celebrated in Ethiopia, it is only in the large towns and cities that it resembles the holiday we know. Many westernized Ethiopians decorate Christmas trees and exchange gifts, but most people celebrate in very modest ways.

TIMKAT FEAST

The most important religious holiday among Christians is Epiphany -- called *Timkat*. At this time, Christ's baptism by John the Baptist in the River Jordan is celebrated. It is a time when all those wishing to renew their Christian vows immerse themselves in sanctified water. All this is done to the accompaniment of an elaborate religious ceremony with white-turbanned priests, *dabtaras* (see Health) and deacons all richly dressed in ceremonial robes and holding beautiful fringed, embroidered umbrellas. Villagers come and light campfires; they spend the time eating, singing and dancing until the early morning baptism ceremony.

GLOSSARY

amba: a flat-topped elevation found in the highlands

barefoot doctor: a paramedic who works in the villages or travels with the nomads, mainly in the liberated areas of Eritrea

barnos: a hooded woolen cloak

berberi: a hot spice used in making *wat*, a stew which is part of the national dish

dabtara: a religious scholar and sometimes spiritual healer, without official church status

deforestation: the clearing of trees in an area, causing soil erosion

dega: the cold climatic zone that lies above 2,440 m (8,000 ft.)

demera: a tepee-shaped structure made of poles decorated with *maskal* daisies, used to celebrate the holiday Maskal

feudalism: a social system in which landlords owning large amounts of land, or hereditary overlords, receive revenue from those who work the land and exercise functions of government in their domains.

fukara: a boasting song and dance performed by men

Ge'ez: an ancient Semitic language now dead but still used in church services

injector or **dresser:** a person who serves as a doctor's assistant, whose duties include dressing wounds and giving injections

injera: a thin, spongy, pancake-like bread

jihad: Moslem holy war

kabaro: a small wooden drum with skin stretched over one end

k'amis: a white cotton dress with full skirt

Koran: the Moslem holy book

k'urban: church marriage

kutta: a double *shamma* (shawl) for extra warmth

kwashiorkor: severe malnutrition in infants and children, caused by a diet high in carbohydrate and extremely low in protein

marasmus: a disease caused by malnourishment from diet deficient in calories and proteins, which causes children to waste away

maskal: the Ethiopian cross; often the ceremonial cross used in religious ceremonies

Maskal: a religious holiday celebrating the finding of Christ's cross

Maskarem: the first month of the Ethiopian year

masob: a table of woven straw on which meals are served

mercato: market

mousho: a folksong sung at funerals

muezzin: the men who call the Moslem faithful to prayer

nagarit: a long drum with skin stretched over both ends

negus: king

Oral Rehydration Solution: a combination of water, salt and sugar, which can temporarily prevent death from dehydration in children

Pagamen: the last month of the Ethiopian calendar

quolla: the low-lying, hot climatic zone

Ramadan: the Moslem fast which lasts 30 days, during which the faithful do not eat between sunrise and sunset

Ras: the title given to a noble, usually a prince or duke

samaniya: civil contract marriage

shamma: a three-metre-long (ten-foot) shawl worn by both men and women

sistrum: a percussion instrument which makes a jingling sound

tabot: a carved piece of wood or stone representing the Ark of the Covenant

talla: home-brewed beer made from barley

teff: a type of grain grown only in Ethiopia and used to make *injera*

tej: an alcoholic drink made from honey

Timkat: Epiphany, an important religious holiday

tukul: the most common type of housing: a round structure with mud-plaster walls and cone-shaped roof

villagization: a movement to put farmers into village cooperatives

washint: a flute with four holes

wat: a spicy stew eaten with *injera*

woina dega: the temperate climatic zone found at elevations of 1,500-2,440 m (5,000-8,000 ft.)

woizerit: Miss

woizero: Mrs.

yperite: mustard gas

zaffran: a folksong about the joys and sorrows of everyday life

zar: an evil spirit

SUGGESTED ACTIVITIES

INTRODUCTION

1. Discuss what students know about Ethiopia before they begin to study it. Try as a class to fill in a chart on Ethiopia from information you already know about location, climate, famous leaders, capital, etc.

2. Make up a list of questions you would like to have answered about Ethiopia. Invite a guest who is from Ethiopia or has visited there. Discuss your chart and questions with them. Have your guest bring slides, pictures or artifacts to discuss as well. Write down some of your impressions of Ethiopia. Have volunteers write their impressions on the board. Have students keep their notes to compare with their knowledge after studying the country.

3. Make up an information kit on Ethiopia as you study this unit.

   a) Collect pictures and photographs of Ethiopia, and make a display.
   b) Take pictures or videos of:
      - students doing activities on Ethiopia
      - visitors to the classroom
   c) Make a mural or a large illustrative map of Ethiopia
   d) Make or draw an Ethiopian flag
   e) See movies or videos about Ethiopia
   f) Students can write reports on books they read about Ethiopia

4. Look at the fact sheet for Ethiopia. Make up a similar fact sheet for your country, using the same headings. As a class, discuss each heading. Where are the biggest differences? Can you explain reasons for them? Are there similarities? Make graphs comparing your country and Ethiopia, eg. population, size, GNP, number of physicians, life expectancy, literacy. Some graphs may be pictorial.

THE LAND

1. What are the natural defences of Ethiopia? Of your country? How do you think these geographic defences affected the history and development of Ethiopia? Of your country? What are the advantages and disadvantages of the defences? Do these natural defences still work today? Why or why not?

2. Much of Ethiopia lies at a high altitude. How do you think this affected the Ethiopian people? Think about:

customs
clothing
agriculture
education

3. Compare the height of Ethiopia's highest mountain, Ras Dashan, with the highest mountain in your country.

4. Research and write a report on the Great Rift Valley. Include:

- how it was formed
- its size
- areas it passes through
- what it looks like

5. Why is the Abbai an important river? Look up other rivers of Ethiopia in an atlas. Draw them on a map of Ethiopia. Where do they begin? End? In which directions do they flow? Name six reasons why rivers in general are important to the people of the world. Are Ethiopian rivers important for these same reasons?

6. The Danakil Depression lies below sea level. Name other places in the world that are also below sea level. Compare them as to altitude, size, climate, vegetation, etc.

7. Where do most of the people in Ethiopia live? In your country? Why? How do topography and climate help to determine where people live?

8. Nature has both helped and hindered development in the world's different regions. How has it influenced development in your country? Think about: mountains, valleys, deserts, rivers, lakes, seas, vegetation.

	Helped	Hindered
Ethiopia		
Your Country		

9. Find definitions for: plateau
amba
depression

Locate the regions in Ethiopia where they can be found.

From your knowledge of topography and climate, where would you prefer to live in Ethiopia? In your country?

10. Using an atlas, measure the distances between:

Measure:
1. Addis Ababa and Asmara
2. Addis Ababa and Assab
3. Gondar and Harar
4. the longest part of the country
5. the widest part of the country

What distances in your country do they correspond to?

CLIMATE

1. Name the three climatic zones of Ethiopia. Between which altitudes do they lie? Look at a map of Ethiopia that includes altitude. Discover where each of the climatic zones is located in the country. Colour a map with a different colour for each zone.

2. How many seasons are there in Ethiopia? In your country? Name them. Fill in this chart by writing the name of the season under each month.

	Jan.	Feb.	Mar.	Apr.	May	June	July	Aug.	Sept.	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.
Ethiopia												
Your Country												

3. Imagine that you were visiting these Ethiopian cities in June. Plan which clothes you would take with you. Why?

a) Addis Ababa
b) Massawa
c) Dire Dawa

4. For a number of years Ethiopia's climate has been changing, especially in the north. How is it changing? What do you think could be the reason for it? (Hint: Think about vegetation, moisture retention, humidity.) Have you had any climatic changes in your country? If so, what are they? Do you know the reasons for them?

HISTORY

1. Evidence of early human existence has been found in Ethiopia. Research these findings and give a report to the class. Some sources:

   i) Johannson, Donald, and Maitland, Edey. 1981. *Lucy: The Beginnings of Humankind.* New York. Simon and Schuster.
   ii) National Geographic. December 1976. *Hadar.* D. Johannson.
   iii) Nature 260:389. 1976. *Hominid remains from Hadar, Ethiopia.*

2. On a globe of the world, find Yemen and Mecca. Calculate how far they are from Ethiopia. What part did they play in Ethiopian history?

3. Make up a play about Frumentrus and his brother's arrival in Ethiopia and their life there. Decide the characters, setting (where and when), plot and theme. What influence has this event had on Ethiopia? How has it made Ethiopia different from the other countries around it?

4. What is the difference between the lineage of kings of the Zagwe dynasty and the noblemen who succeeded them?

5. Research the legend of Prester John, and tell the class about it. What part did the legend play in the history of Ethiopia?

6. Research the legend of King Solomon and the Queen of Sheba. Write either Solomon's or Sheba's diary of the encounter. Where do historians think Sheba actually came from?

7. Write the headlines and opening paragraph for the news story announcing Ahmed Gran's death in the battle between the Portuguese and Ethiopians for (a) a Moslem newspaper, (b) a Christian newspaper.

8. Imagine that you are Menelik II. Write a newsletter to your subjects to let them know about your accomplishments. What achievements led to the betterment of the average rural dweller in Ethiopia?

9. Feudalism is a way of organizing a society. Choose a society other than Ethiopia that was organized in this way. Name the country and give the approximate dates of this organization. Describe the society. Compare it with Ethiopian feudalism.

10. What difference did the opening of the Suez Canal in 1869 make to Ethiopia? To Europe? To India?

11. If you were a member of the Amhara aristocracy, would you have supported Lej Iyasu? Why or why not? How would history have changed if he hadn't been deposed?

12. Put these Ethiopian rulers in chronological order:

Haile Selassie
Lalibela
Fasiladas
Mengistu
Princess Zawditu
Mussolini
Lej Iyasu

Choose one of them to write a report on.

13. Hold a "League of Nations" meeting. Choose which nation you will represent. Have someone read Haile Selassie's speech, as printed in the text. Have a discussion about whether to assist Ethiopia. Vote to assist or not. Give reasons for your vote.

14. Why did Italy and Ethiopia go to war? How is war different now from when Italy conquered Ethiopia? Make a list of other wars going on today. What is the reason for each of these wars? Think about: economics, independence, religion, politics. Are civilians involved or soldiers only? If civilians are involved, in what way are they affected? What are the costs of war? Choose a war and decide on measures which could be used to stop it. Why is it important to stop war? Write a speech telling of the futility of war. Have a speech competition with a prize going to the student who can most effectively convince others of his/her viewpoint against war -- or -- Make a video or audiotape advocating peace, as a class project.

15. On a map of Ethiopia, find these sites. Choose two or three, and explain what part they played in the history of the country.

Axum
Gondar
Addis Ababa
Asmara
Eritrea
Ogaden
Massawa
Tigre

16. Role-play the arrest of Haile Selassie, and have him express his ideas aloud.

17. List the changes the Dergue made when it took power in 1974. Tell why it made each change.

18. Make a list of reasons why Eritrea did not want to be a part of Ethiopia in 1962.

19. Why did Ethiopia want Eritrea to become a province?

20. Write two sets of headlines for an Eritrean newspaper for the event of Eritrea becoming (a) a province of Ethiopia, and (b) a separate nation -- one set uncensored by Ethiopia and one set censored.

21. Write a Letter to the Editor explaining Tigre's position and what the liberation groups want from the central government.

22. Match the event with the date it occurred.

1960	Soviets begin aid to Somalia
1968	Many plan to return home, but the drought is too severe
1974	Somali soldiers withdrawn from Ogaden
1976	Somalia becomes independent from Britain and Italy
1977	Cuban and Russian soldiers come to Ethiopia's aid
Nov'77	WSLF founded with Somali support
1978	Many refugees start to return home
1978	Soviets begin to supply aid to Ethiopia
1984	Many people flee the Ogaden to live in refugee camps in Somalia and Djibouti
1986	Somalia breaks ties with Russia

GOVERNMENT

1. The Ethiopian legislature, the National Shengo, is patterned on the system in the Soviet Union. Find out more about the Soviet system to help you fill out this chart.

	Ethiopia	Soviet Union	Your country
Title of Head of State			
Current leader			
Name of legislative body			
Number of members			
Length of term of members			
Location of government			
Name of government quarters			
System of government			
Length of time in power			
National day			

RELIGION

1. Make a chart listing the religions of the world in their order of occurrence.

Date	Religion	Deity	Spiritual leader	A belief	A practice	No. of adherents

2. In all three of Ethiopia's major religions Jesus Christ plays a part. How is He thought of in each of these religions?

1. Christianity
2. Judaism
3. Islam

3. List four beliefs or practices that these religions have in common.

4. As a class, discuss or make a chart showing the similarities and differences between a Christian church service in your country and the one described in the text in Ethiopia.

5. List the five Pillars of Islam. How do these practices compare with those of your religion? How do these practices affect the everyday lives of the people?

6. Who are the Falashas? Why was Operation Moses carried out by Israel? Discuss.

PEOPLE

1. Fill in this chart. Name the ethnic groups mentioned in the text.

	Ethnic group	Main religion	Major rural occupations	Interesting fact
1				
2				
3				
4				
5				
6				
7				

2. If you were to take a holiday in Ethiopia, with which ethnic group would you like to spend time? Make a list of things you would like to learn about them on your visit. If you were entertaining a guest from Ethiopia, where would you take them? To whom would you introduce them? What would you do? Tell why you would make these choices.

3. Make a list of words or phrases you think might be necessary to learn in the language of the people you are visiting.

4. Among the Oromos, especially the Borana, the stages of life with their specific responsibilities, are clearly defined with rituals. Do people in North America go through similar stages? What rites of passage do we have? Compare the stages that Borana males go through with the stages of development that North Americans experience. What are the advantages and disadvantages of both systems?

AGRICULTURE

1. Divide the class into four groups. Each group is assigned a type of farming done in Ethiopia:

   a) Small subsistence farming
   b) Village cooperative
   c) State farm
   d) Nomadic pastoralism

Decide: a) What area of the country your farm or grazing lands are.
b) The climate there.
c) How much land your grazing area or farm consists of.
d) The crops you grow.
e) The animals that are raised.
f) What equipment and methods are used.
g) Who works on the farm or looks after the animals.
h) Which ethnic group the farmers or herders belong to.
i) What religion they practise.
j) What the duties of the farmers or herders are.
k) What is happening to your land and why. What you can do about it.

Act out a day in the life of each group.

2. Imagine that you are a subsistence farmer in Ethiopia. Your land can no longer sustain your family. You have an opportunity to enter a villagization program or resettlement program or to try to improve your own land with terracing or tree-planting schemes. In a family discussion, decide what to do. Discuss the advantages and disadvantages of each alternative. Choose one.

3. What is famine? List five causes of the famine in Ethiopia. Discuss each one. What measures could be taken to alleviate each problem?

4. With the famine in Ethiopia, 7 million people are in danger of starvation. Which is more important, food aid or development assistance (a) in the short term, (b) in the long term? In groups, decide what kind of development assistance Ethiopia needs. How would you go about setting up a program to assist? Research which groups are already helping Ethiopia. Where is their aid going? To the central government? To liberation groups? Who is benefiting? How much aid is needed? What are the Ethiopians doing for themselves? How can they be assisted? What problems have aid agencies encountered in trying to get aid to the people who need it? Think about: the wars, climate, transportation, communication. How might you overcome them?

5. What part did the media play in helping to alleviate the recent famines in Ethiopia? What did the media say about (a) the famine's causes, (b) long-term development needs for Ethiopia?

6. How have international politics influenced the amount and type of aid or development assistance Ethiopia receives?

RURAL LIFE

1. Make a list of the duties of men and women in the rural area. Are there any differences in the war zones? Fill out a chart comparing the time you and your parents spend on different activities during the day with that spent by members of an Ethiopian rural family. Add up the number of hours spent on each activity. Compare them.

Time	Your father	Ethiopian farmer	Your mother	Ethiopian woman	You	Ethiopian student
Total--	Work					
	Leisure					
	Misc.					

2. After completing the 12th grade in school, young men are conscripted into the army. If boys do not remain in school or in certain areas or situations, they are conscripted much earlier. Role-play a discussion between a boy and his family members concerning his future. Discuss the options mentioned in the text. Tape the role-play, and discuss it as a class.

3. What sources of energy are available in your community? In North America? What sources of energy are used in Ethiopia? What are some potential sources? Is energy overused in North America? If so, give examples. How can North Americans lessen their dependence on non-renewable resources? What alternatives might there be?

4. Imagine that you live in the countryside in Ethiopia where your father is a farmer. Write an entry in your diary describing your day.

5. Find out the GNP per capita for your country. What is the GNP per capita for Ethiopia? (The fact sheet will give you this information.) Give two reasons why the GNP is not a particularly accurate way to compare living standards in different countries.

Make up a yearly budget for your family and for an Ethiopian rural family of six (parents and four children).

	Your family	Ethiopian family
1. Housing		
2. Food		
3. Clothing		
4. Utilities		
5. Transportation		
6. Education		
7. Health care		
8. Entertainment		
9. Drugs and cosmetics		
10. Miscellaneous		
TOTAL		

What conclusions can you draw from this chart? Perhaps you could discuss:

- The difference between poverty in North America and that in developing countries.
- How poverty is relative to the general standard of living.
- What part is played by
  - family
  - government
  - religious institutions
  - the community

in providing for the poor in your country and in Ethiopia.

MARRIAGE AND FAMILY LIFE

1. How is the structure of the family changing in your community? How is family life changing?

2. How does each of these factors change family life in Ethiopia?

   a) War
   b) Drought
   c) Resettlement

3. List the similarities and differences between a marriage in your community and one in an Ethiopian community.

4. Using the Ethiopian system of naming, what would your name be?

5. Have there been changes recently in the position of women in Ethiopia? If so, what and why? Do you think any differences would be long-lasting? Why or why not?

INDUSTRY

1. You are the Ethiopian Minister of Industry and have been given a budget for establishing an industry in Ethiopia. Choose an industry that would most benefit the country. Would it be:

- for export or internal markets?
- labour or capital intensive?

Decide if:

- it will be rural or urban-based
- the availability of materials is reliable
- the transportation system is adequate
- there is a suitable and sufficient labour supply
- there is an adequate power supply
- the money should be spent on one centralized factory or several scattered plants

Make your decisions in groups, with a spokesperson reporting to the class. Questions from the class can be answered by any member of the group.

2. Sugar cane is an important crop in Ethiopia. Find out how sugar is extracted from the cane. Where does the sugar come from that you use? Colour in a map of the world showing where sugar beets are grown and where cane is grown commercially. Which is more expensive to produce, sugar from beets or from cane? Which do you think is better to buy, the sugar produced from beets grown in your country or the cane sugar produced in a developing country? Who buys sugar for industrial consumption? For consumer consumption?

3. Is Ethiopia's industrial production mainly for export or for the domestic market? What are the advantages and disadvantages?

4. How do you think Ethiopia's industries have been affected by:

- the war
- the famine
- relocation
- the revolutionary government?

CITIES

1. List the advantages one would have living in Addis Ababa compared to other places in Ethiopia. In your opinion, what would be the negative aspects to living in Addis? List them.

2. How does Addis compare with your community? Name the similarities and differences.

3. Imagine that you are visiting Addis on a holiday. What time of year would you go? Write a postcard to your friends or family telling them about your time in Addis. Draw a picture on the reverse side of something that interests you in Ethiopia's capital.

4. Of the three cities discussed in the text, which one do you find the most interesting? Why? The least interesting? Why?

5. What problems are the people of Asmara encountering because of the war?

6. Research and write a report on Harar. In what ways is it similar to Dire Dawa and in what ways different?

HOUSING

1. Housing meets people's needs for shelter, privacy and space to carry out social and economic activities. Make a list of the things and activities that a North American family uses its home for. Would an Ethiopian family use its home for the same things? What would be similar? Different?

2. Name types of modern western-style housing. Choose one. What would be the advantages and disadvantages of it in Africa? What are the typical Ethiopian-style dwellings? How do they compare? Think about: windows, insulation, storage, cooking, building materials, design.

	Western-style	*Tukul*
Advantages		
Disadvantages		

3. Do you have a housing shortage in your community? If so, do you know why? Is anything being done to alleviate the problem? Is there a housing shortage problem in Ethiopia? Where? Why? What can the government do to help the situation?

4. Using the description from the text, make a model of a typical Ethiopian family compound.

FOOD

1. Name four food groups. Do you eat foods from all four groups at your meals? Make up a menu for a day, making sure that each meal has foods from each group. Do most Ethiopians eat food from each group every day? How do the following foods fit into the food groups: hamburgers and fries, injera and wat, tacos, pizza? Make a chart and put the ingredients of the dishes under the food group headings.

2. *Injera* is the staple food of Ethiopia. It is usually made with a grain called *teff*, which is grown only in Ethiopia. Other grains can be used to make it, however. Try this recipe:

Injera

250 grams (2 cups) self-rising wheat flour
250 g (2 c.) whole wheat flour
60 g (½ c.) yellow corn flour
1 tsp. yeast
50 ml (2 fl. oz.) warm water
1 tsp. sugar
water

Mix yeast, warm water and sugar into a smooth paste and set aside for 15 or 20 minutes, until the mixture has frothed up. Combine the flours in a mixing bowl and add the yeast and enough water to make the mixture the consistency of pancake batter. Let it ferment for 24 hours. Add boiling water to get a thin batter consistency. Put some batter in a small jug for easy pouring. Heat a large griddle on top of the stove. Pour the batter in a spiral starting at the outside and working in until the griddle is covered. Cover with a lid for one or two minutes until the injera is a golden brown. Remove and repeat until all the batter is used.

3. Serve *injera* with tea or coffee. Make the coffee the way it is described in the text. Remember to keep a calm atmosphere out of respect for the coffee, burn incense, and discuss what you have been learning about Ethiopia.

4. Choose a food that would make the diet of the average Ethiopian more nutritious. Make a radio or TV commercial encouraging the use of this food and stating its benefits. Make suggestions on how they can serve it. Video- or audiotape the commercials. Discuss whether they would be effective or not.

DRESS

1. Cotton is a very popular fabric in Ethiopia. Give three reasons why you think this is so. Research how cotton is grown, harvested and processed into cotton cloth.

2. The *shamma* is a practical garment. Give three reasons why you think it is so important in Ethiopia. Find pictures of Ethiopians in traditional dress. Bring to class a piece of cloth the length of a *shamma*. Try draping it as the Ethiopians do.

3. What do you think Ethiopians who work in office jobs in Addis Ababa and Asmara wear?

4. How does climate determine what people in your country wear? How does climate determine what people in Ethiopia wear?

5. Leather is a luxury material for clothes in North America. What clothing in your country is made of leather? Some of the ethnic groups in Ethiopia use leather for clothing. Why?

HEALTH

1. What is malnutrition? Name two diseases in children that result from malnutrition. What types of malnourishment do they result from? What is the main cause for malnourishment in Ethiopia? What are other causes? What health conditions can malnourishment result in?

2. Complete this life expectancy graph.

80
70
60
50
40
30
1987

Men Women
Ethiopia

Men Women
Your Country

Using this information, what conclusions can be made about health care in your country and in Ethiopia? What other factors play a part in life expectancy?

3. Malaria is primarily found in Ethiopian lowland areas. Why is this so? What are the symptoms and cure? What can be done to try to eliminate this disease?

4. Name the different types of medical workers in your country and in Ethiopia. Which ones are the same and which are different? Is there a difference between those found in rural and urban areas?

5. What is preventative medicine? Name different practices that are preventative. What is being done in Ethiopia in the area of prevention? What conditions make it difficult to concentrate on preventative medicine in Ethiopia?

EDUCATION

1. Imagine that you are attending school in Ethiopia for a year. Write friends in your community back home, telling them about your life at school in Ethiopia, things that are the same and different. What would you miss the most about your school? Then make a list of the ways Ethiopian students could make life easier for you. Would these suggestions help new immigrants adapt to school in your country? Put some of the ideas into practice.

2. What school subjects do you think are the most important in Ethiopia? In your country? Why?

3. Schooling in most of Ethiopia and in the Eritrean areas controlled by liberation groups is quite different. Discuss the differences. Which methods do you think better fulfil the needs of the majority of Ethiopians? Why? Which system is more like the North American one?

4. It is said that the literacy program in Ethiopia has been the main achievement of the central government. Discuss.

5. There are many different languages in Ethiopia. The languages of instruction in the schools, however, are Amharic and English. Do you think this is a good idea? Why or why not? Do you think other languages should be taught? Why or why not?

ART

1. Find pictures of early Ethiopian manuscripts. Try drawing or painting a page of a manuscript -- as individuals, in groups or as a class. If as individuals or groups, put the pages together and bind them.

2. Find examples of Ethiopian traditional art. Draw or paint a picture using their traditional conventions. Then have an art exhibition with a gallery opening. Have each student choose an Ethiopian name, dress in Ethiopian clothes, play Ethiopian music, and serve Ethiopian refreshments.

3. If there is an Ethiopian living in your community, invite him or her to your classroom. Ask them to teach the class one of their traditional dances.

4. Listen to some traditional Ethiopian music. Is it religious or secular? Try working out the beat. As a class, clap or use percussion instruments, and play along with the music.

5. Find out what some of the instruments are in the music you have listened to. Find pictures and draw some of the instruments.

6. Listen to some Ethiopian songs. Try to figure out which category they fall into (the *fukara*, the *mousho*, the *zaffran*).

7. In Ethiopia, art is a part of the daily lives of the people in their songs, dances, crafts, clothing, religious services and storytelling. Does art play an important part in your life? Name ways in which you encounter art in your life.

LEISURE

1. If you could attend a festival in Ethiopia, which one would you attend? Why? What events do you have in your community which might be compared to a festival in Ethiopia? Which is your favourite? How do you celebrate it?

2. In Ethiopia people often spend their leisure time in the company of others. How do you spend your leisure time? How do others in your community spend theirs? In what ways are the activities similar? Different?

3. It has been predicted that people in North America will have more leisure time in the years to come. Why do you think this is so? In what ways do you think people will spend this time? Do you think the people of Ethiopia will have more time for leisure activities in the future? Why or why not?

4. The Ethiopian runner, Abebe Bikila, won the Olympic marathon twice. What were his times? Has his Tokyo record been broken? By whom? Where? What were their times? Have there been other famous Ethiopian Olympians?

COMPLETION ACTIVITIES

1. Imagine that you work for a large North American advertising agency, which the Ethiopian government's Ministry of Tourism has just approached to set up an advertising campaign to attract North American tourists to Ethiopia. Think about the advantages and disadvantages of tourism.

Tourism would:

Pros	Cons
1. provide the North Americans with an opportunity to better understand the Ethiopian culture.	1. by seeing wealthy foreigners, cause resentments among people who are making a subsistence living.
2. provide foreign currency for developing the country, when tourists pay for accommodation, food and transportation.	2. tend to promote foreign companies which own hotels and car rentals, etc. and send money earned back to their country. Also, building materials for hotels and food must be imported.
3. provide much-needed employment.	3. create mostly low-paying jobs, such as maids, waiters, taxi drivers, etc.
4. have foreign investors finance projects such as airports, water systems, electricity and roads to benefit Ethiopians.	4. produce amenities that seldom benefit those who need them most in the rural outlying areas.

5. preserve historical sites and wildlife species.

6. conserve Ethiopian cultural heritage by promoting the arts and festivals. (You may want to add to this list from your reading of the text.)

5. possibly lead to increased crime and pollution.

6. disrupt Ethiopian cultural values and life-styles.

Is there any way the negative aspects could be lessened?

Make a list of the things happening in Ethiopia that are likely to discourage tourists from visiting the country.

Role-play a company meeting to discuss the pros and cons of accepting the Ethiopian contract. Take a vote on whether to accept the offer or not.

If the majority votes to turn down the contract, write a business letter to the Minister of Tourism explaining the reasons for your refusal and perhaps suggesting conditions under which you would accept.

If the majority decides to accept the contract, design an advertisement that will convince tourists to visit Ethiopia. Your ad could be for radio, TV, magazines, or newspapers. You can video or audiotape it or illustrate it in colour or black and white, depending on the media chosen. Include why people should visit Ethiopia. Think about:

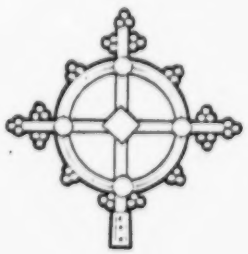
- water resources (coasts, rivers, falls, lakes, etc.)
- wildlife resources (game reserves, etc.)
- historical sites (Axum, Lalibela, Adowa, Gondar, Harar, etc.)
- cultural resources (festivals, markets, crafts, visual and performing arts).

2. How could you be a better tourist? List five ways.

3. If you had seen the advertisement in question 1 and decided to travel to Ethiopia, decide:

a) when to go
b) where to go
c) what you want to see and do
d) what you would take with you
e) what you would like to bring back as a souvenir.

4. Imagine that you have just returned home from the trip in question 3. Give a presentation to the class about your travels. Trace your route on a large map of Ethiopia. Tell about:

a) the scenery
b) the climate
c) people you met
d) places you visited
e) what you saw and did
f) what you were most impressed with.

5. Canadian educator and writer, Marshall McLuhan, said that the world is "a global village," meaning that due to travel, communication and information, we are much closer to people throughout the world, and we recognize our dependencies and common humanity. Have your travels in Ethiopia, through this text, made this perception true for you? How?